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GERMAN DIPLOMATIC DOCUMENTS 1871-1914

IN FOUR VOLUMES

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IN FOUR VOLUMES

SELECTED AND TRANSLATED BY

E. T. S. DUGDALE

VOLUME II

FROM BISMARCK'S FALL TO 1898

WITH A PREFACE BY THE RT. HON.

Sir CHARLES ELIOT, G.C.M.G.

LATE BRITISH AMBASSADOR AT TOKIO

HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS
NEW YORK AND LONDON
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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

THE object pursued in the preparation of this selection from the *Grosse Politik der Europäischen Mächte*, 1871–1914, has been to present a true and unbiased picture of the motives underlying the actions of the various countries and statesmen in the period under review, more particularly as these affected the relations between Germany and England and the United States. The attempt to condense about fifty German volumes into four English ones has made it necessary to concentrate on what may serve to illustrate the origins and the true course of events, and to omit much of the great wealth of detail which is the wonder of those who are acquainted with the monumental German original.

Those of the notes in small type, which are not taken straight from the German original, are enclosed in square brackets.

The references at the head of each document (VIII, 203) give the volume and page in the *Grosse Politik*.

The translator's warm thanks are due to Mr. J. W. Headlam Morley for his invaluable advice and general control throughout the course of the work, and to Mrs. Edgar Dugdale for assistance in revising the translation, and also to others whom the translator has consulted on various points of fact.

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HISTORICAL PREFACE

BY

RT. HON. SIR CHARLES ELIOT, G.C.M.G.

THE present instalment of German Diplomatic Documents deals with the years 1890–1898, that is the time immediately following the fall of Bismarck, when the young Kaiser ruled with, first, Caprivi (1900–4) and then Hohenlohe as Chancellors. In England Lord Salisbury was both Prime and Foreign Minister, except from August, 1892, to July, 1895, when the Liberals under Gladstone and subsequently under Lord Rosebery were in power. Thus this second volume covers a much shorter space than its predecessor (1871–1901). The period is not marked by international events of the first magnitude. There was no war or revolution in Europe, but the sphere of German and indeed of European politics became enlarged. A glance at the tables of contents will show that, whereas the first deals incidentally with Egypt, Samoa and Zanzibar, the second is mainly occupied with the questions raised by these and other distant regions such as Armenia, Morocco, Tunis, Tripoli, Abyssinia, South Africa, Siam, Crete and Cuba. Bismarck had never really liked a colonial policy, though he reluctantly admitted that he must support it, but in the present papers colonial expansion is a recognised part of the official programme—Germany has possessions in Africa—she protests vigorously against our Congo treaty because it may result in her East African Protectorate being surrounded by British territory. Even before the Jameson Raid she objects to Dr. Jameson's idea of a Commercial Federation of the States of South Africa. Her aim is to set up a German administration in Samoa and she thinks of obtaining the cession of Amoy. The Emperor deplores the unwillingness of his advisers to seize Delagoa Bay (page 393). 'I think differently, but I submit,' is his minute when in 1896 the Chancellor represents to him that such an occupation would unite France and England against Germany. A few months later he complains bitterly that Colonies without a fleet are merely a heel of Achilles (page 471). 'Our trade is waging a life and death struggle with England . . . but the great merchant navy which sails all the

seas under our flag is helpless before the 130 British cruisers to which we proudly oppose four.'

Though we see this direct interest in non-European questions growing year by year, the characteristic attitude of German foreign policy is still that defined in a despatch addressed to the Consul-General at Cairo in July, 1896 (page 303): 'Egypt represents, no more than Bulgaria, an end in itself for us, but merely a means for regulating our relations towards other Powers in a way best suited to our interests.' This is the idea which inspires most of the despatches in this volume. They are concerned with the six Great Powers and aim at securing for Germany a prominent and, if possible, paramount position among them. In a similar collection of British documents we should be sure to find voluminous Consular reports on the condition and aspirations of the Armenians, Samoans and other races whose destinies are at stake. But such matters seem to have no importance for the German Foreign Office. 'It is fairly indifferent to us under which misgovernment the Cretans suffer' is one of the Kaiser's minutes. The smaller countries of Europe are mostly ignored, and even in discussing the Moorish question Spain is dismissed as 'a state which is of little use for European purposes' (page 142). But of the six Great Powers, their strong and weak points, the desires which they cherish, the dangers which threaten them, the personalities and idiosyncrasies of their rulers, politicians and diplomatists, the writers show an exact and intimate knowledge like that of a scientific specialist in his own subject. Does Salisbury or Goluchowsky show signs of an uncertain temper or of favouring a new view? The change is at once reported and busy pens write memoranda on its significance, possible permanence and the best means of encouraging or counteracting it. So anxious are the Germans to make the best use of foreign statesmen that they come very near to instructing them as if they were Ministers of the Kaiser. In July, 1893, Baron Holstein did not entirely approve of Lord Rosebery's language to the Turkish Ambassador. So he wrote to Count Hatzfeldt that it would be more conciliatory if the Foreign Minister, when he next sees Rustem Pasha, would speak 'somewhat in the following sense' (page 194). Here follows the text of a reply agreeable to Germany, and Holstein explains how much better it is than Lord Rosebery's own language. In the same communication he recommends that Sir Frank Lascelles be sent to Constantinople to succeed Sir Clare Ford, and perhaps the British Foreign Office would not have done badly to follow this advice.

So far as England is concerned, one of the chief aims of this careful study and attempted guidance is to prevent her from having an alliance or even an understanding with France or

Russia or, worse still, with both—the very combination it will be observed which occurred in the Great War. Marschall, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, speaks in 1891 (pages 142–3) of 'our wish that England should set herself in acute and lasting rivalry with France by seizing Tangier and Spartel'. On this Caprivi, the Chancellor, observes that so long as England and France *want* something in North Africa, the uncertainty will keep them in rivalry; but that if they get it, they will live at peace, a 'condition which we ought not to hurry on'. And on many occasions the Emperor's marginal notes express his pleasure at Anglo-French misunderstandings. 'England's flirtation with Gallo-Russia is upset,' he writes in 1896. 'That is all I wanted. I am delighted' (page 429). In the same year the German Ambassador at Vienna observes that Germany's position would become very difficult in the event of even a transitory understanding between Russia and England. Those who were in St. Petersburg between 1886 and 1893 will remember how Sir Robert Morier was hated and persecuted by the Germans because he showed signs of effecting such an understanding.

Hatzfeldt, the German Ambassador in London, seems to have been reasonably pro-British. In 1896 we find him arguing with Holstein (page 406), that it is not in Germany's interest 'to let the British power be destroyed'. But throughout the correspondence Marschall and Holstein appear as Anglophobes. The idea of a Continental league against England makes its first official appearance in a memorandum by the latter at the end of 1895 and in the next year it is supported by the Emperor. About the same time we find Marschall looking forward to a blessed state of things in which all the Continental Powers 'in spite of differences of opinion on every other question would be united in one thought, which is that England is never any help and often does harm' (page 417). It is some relief to find that the Austrian Foreign Minister, Count Goluchowsky, spoke with much energy against such an anti-British coalition and said to the German Ambassador at Vienna, 'I will *never, never* be a party to it' (page 435). It seems probable that the famous Krüger telegram was really suggested and drafted by Marschall and that the Emporer somewhat toned it down.

Yet violent as is the language which in the course of this correspondence German statesmen often use about England, their selfishness is too enlightened to allow them to entertain a mere personal antipathy. I am reminded, too, of the remarks of a contemporary German writer.[1] 'The results of this so-called faithlessness prove that the impression cannot be right. In spite of all her proven hypocrisy, England always recaptures

[1] Keyserling, *Europe*. Translated by Samuel, 1928, p. 18.

the confidence of others. In spite of all her proven faithlessness, she not only does not lose her honour, she actually advances it.' If the Kaiser, Marschall and Holstein cannot exactly make a friend of England, their aim is not to quarrel but to induce her by concessions or threats to follow the course which they from time to time desire. In 1895 the Consul-General in Egypt is reminded that his Government do not wish him to oppose or even criticise publicly British policy there (page 300). If England wants German help, she must of course give a *quid pro quo* from time to time; but still, the despatch proceeds to explain, 'we cannot (except under acute provocation as in the Congo incident) decently set ourselves in open and permanent antagonism to England, for this would be neither in consonance with the traditional close relationship between the two nations nor with the feelings of our associates in the Triple Alliance'. Another case of what was considered 'acute provocation' occurred in 1893. Marschall writes of 'the offensively hostile attitude of the British Embassy at Constantinople which in all railway schemes in Asia Minor assists French interests to the injury of Germany'. Consequently he has recourse to the method described above of using Egypt as 'a means for regulating German relations towards other Powers' and instructs the German Consul-General there not to give further support to England and to let Lord Cromer know the reason. Apparently our Embassy mended its ways, for in 1895 the German Foreign Office telegraphed to their Ambassador in Turkey, 'Bring pressure according to your standing instructions on the Sultan and the Porte to give way to England' (page 328).

In 1897 the Chancellor, Prince Hohenlohe, who was less of an Anglophobe than Marschall and his assistants, gives an interesting summary of his views (page 445): 'It would be blindness', he writes, 'not to recognise that the mere existence of England is a valuable factor in the European balance. Without identifying ourselves as closely with the existence of the British Empire as with the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, we yet consider it to be a useful political element and we regret that the want of moderation and other defects of British policy are of a kind to produce general enmity against England. In clear recognition of the advantages accruing from England, we confine ourselves in dealing with British mistakes to a purely defensive attitude.'

The mistrust of British policy which constantly appears in these documents, the conviction that it is aggressive and untrustworthy, may seem strange, but it was not peculiar to Germany. In 1898 I made a journey in Europe during which I stopped in the territory of most of the Great Powers and I still recollect the vivid impression which I received that England was everywhere disliked and mistrusted. It was the year after Queen

Victoria's second Jubilee, and the strength and self-confidence shown during that celebration were not pleasant, even to our friends, and inspired alarm. It is clear too that in these papers German critics often misjudge British statesmen and find deep schemes in conduct which was due to mere embarrassment. In 1895 Holstein thought (page 335) that Lord Salisbury had 'a scheme for a flare-up in the Balkans' and the Kaiser described the imaginary plot as 'truly English' (page 337). But it may be safely said that Lord Salisbury had no such scheme and that his policy was to be explained by the simple phrase which he used to the German Ambassador on another occasion: 'Parce que je n'ai pas envie de perdre ma majorité'. The sentimental fits of the British public seemed incredible in Berlin. German statesmen could not conceive of a German or Austrian party demanding redress for the wrongs of Armenia. When such things happened in England, they racked their brains to find some deep-laid, coherent, aggressive plan which would make British policy intelligible.

In his preface to the first volume Sir Rennell Rodd observed that the policy exhibited in the despatches which it contains is governed almost exclusively by the ultimate idea of war. The same is true of the present volume. The writers sometimes speak of avoiding war, but they habitually think of it not as a terrible evil but as a serious step, morally unobjectionable and to be taken by prudent men when it will be clearly to Germany's advantage. Thus, in a memorandum of July, 1890, the Chancellor Caprivi discusses the propriety of declaring war on France about the Tunis-Tripoli question (page 122), and finds that there are two reasons against it. First, 'if we did not succeed in finding a *casus belli* other than Tunis the war might not be popular'; and secondly, 'we are in the middle of changing our infantry weapon'. 'Therefore', he concludes, 'in no case can it be asserted that the general situation and our own in particular is such as to make us bring about war now.' In July, 1893, the Anglo-French dispute about Siam was carefully watched by German statesmen and they discussed whether they should make any use of it. Count Hatzfeldt lays before his Government a statement (page 240) of the situation and asks, first, 'Does it suit our political and military policy for a military conflict to break out *now*?'; and secondly, if it does suit us, what advice should we give to Lord Rosebery to do? The Chancellor's comment is: 'From the point of view of domestic policy a war would not be undesirable, if strongly supported by public opinion. From the military point of view it is just as good now as later.' It is often said that the idea of war with England as Germany's chief enemy became popular and that German officers used to

drink to Der Tag, the day of reckoning when they would be able to settle accounts with us. But the aim of the statesmen of the nineties is rather to involve England in diplomatic troubles which will end in her being irretrievably committed to fight on the German side. Thus in the note already quoted Caprivi continues (page 242) : ' For us, the best beginning for the next great war would be for the first shot to be fired from a British ship. . . . We must avoid sending Italy forward alone. . . . First commit England irretrievably and then but not till then, whether Russia comes in later or not, let the Triple Alliance Powers, or Italy plus Germany, take action. That is the correct military sequence and diplomacy must act in accordance with it.'

It is only natural that the volume should come to an end before most of the questions of which it treats have received even a temporary solution. Often, as in reading of the Jameson Raid and Samoan difficulties, the reader wonders what part the Germans played in the later phases. One matter, however, if not solved, is at least finished with, namely the Armenian question.[1] The story is not glorious for British statesmanship, but it illustrates several peculiarities of our own and German policy, and I may be excused if I feel a special interest in it, since I was a secretary in our Embassy at Constantinople from 1893 to 1898. Probably most persons who have had to deal with this question associate it with the name of Sir Philip Currie and imagine that he was responsible for much of the official support which the Armenians received. But the German Foreign Office credited his predecessor, Sir Clare Ford, with having started a troublesome business at what they considered a peculiarly unfortunate moment. Marschall inquired of Hatzfeldt in 1893 whether the British Government or the Ambassador was to blame for this untimely step. He was ready to absolve the former and (showing an extraordinary acquaintance with the details of diplomatic history) mentions the case of a previous British Ambassador to Turkey who acted on general instructions at an ill-chosen moment. Hatzfeldt replied that Lord Rosebery had indeed instructed Sir Clare Ford to turn his attention to Armenia, but he made it clear that the Foreign Minister had yielded reluctantly to the pressure of philanthropists and was not trying to fish in troubled waters. Lord Rosebery had even said that in and for itself Armenia did not interest him in the least.

In November of the same year Prince Radolin, the German Ambassador at Constantinople, reported that the Sultan declared that he would not give way to the Armenians and that he begged the Kaiser to convince the Queen of England of the groundlessness of their complaints. The Imperial comment on this is ' The Devil

[1] Chapters XVI, XXIII and XXIV.

I will. If the Britons want to burn their fingers I shall not stop them ' (page 216). This does not sound friendly, but on the other hand the attitude of Prince Radolin, which had the full approval of the German Government, appears to have been perfectly straightforward and loyal to his British colleague. He was a grand seigneur and, like Hatzfeldt, had a better knowledge of our ways than his official superiors in Berlin. He was repeatedly consulted by the Sultan and warned him that dangerously unsuitable men were being appointed to govern Armenia, where things could not go on as they were. He took the view, for which there was much to be said, that what was needed was not the introduction of reforms and novelties but the proper enforcement of existing laws. He is not unfair in criticizing Currie or in explaining England's attitude. ' I feel I must bear witness ', he says, ' that he (Currie) is calmly and wisely doing his utmost to prevent the Porte and Yildiz from committing further errors ' (page 220) ; and again, ' The readiness with which Sir Philip Currie agreed to the proposals of the Sultan proves once again that England does not intend to obstruct a definite solution of the question and that what she wants is a success, if only an apparent one, in coping with the Government's difficulties—Parliament and the Press ' (page 223). Still he thinks there is some foundation for the idea that England hopes to obtain an extension of the Smyrna-Aidin railway from the Porte (page 223) as a reward for her moderation in Armenian matters—an idea which I believe was entirely unfounded. Though the Kaiser and his Foreign Office had no sympathy with the Armenians and did not wish England success on other grounds, yet it does not appear that they intrigued against us. In December, 1894, the Italian Foreign Minister showed signs of favouring the Russians and ' thought them better fitted than the British to restore order and peace in Armenia ' (pages 225–6). On learning this Marschall at once telegraphed to Rome that the Rosebery Cabinet would probably fall within the next six months and that ' Italy will do well not to destroy the bridge for further co-operation with England for the sake of Armenia.' In May, 1895, when England, France and Russia were pressing for reforms in Armenia, the Sultan again begged the Kaiser to use his influence to restrain them, but the reply was a decided negative.

A few weeks later Lord Salisbury came into power and reluctantly accepted the Armenian heritage bequeathed to him. He told the German Ambassador that if the Sultan would propose an acceptable Governor for Armenia, we should not make demands which would injure his dignity, but that failing such an assurance we could not draw back. The Ambassador reported that he felt certain Lord Salisbury did not wish the Eastern question to be

opened and to end in the partition of the Turkish Empire. Nevertheless, the idea that we were scheming for such a partition took root in German brains and even Hatzfeldt came to believe in it more or less. The Kaiser visited England in the summer and exchanged ideas with Lord Salisbury ; but by some mistake a further interview which His Majesty desired did not take place. The German Foreign Office believed that Lord Salisbury had deliberately 'shirked' this second audience and was angry 'because the Emperor would not be converted to the idea of partition'. At this period Englishmen who were interested in the Near East were familiar with the idea that the Turkish Empire might break up, but their thoughts mostly took the form of fearing Russian aggression and I do not remember ever seeing a British official document in which the partition of Turkey was proposed or recommended. It is probable that Lord Salisbury in his conversations with the Kaiser and Count Hatzfeldt did not intend to go beyond speculating what might occur if Turkey should collapse, which is a very different thing from proposing to divide it. Count Hatzfeldt reported (in August and October) that Lord Salisbury did not desire war between the Continental Powers and was glad that at present there was no fear of a Turkish break-up. But the Kaiser and his Foreign Office persisted in the belief that we were scheming against the integrity of the Ottoman Empire and the evidence of Royal persons was involved. In a most remarkable telegram addressed to his Chancellor the Kaiser reproduces in dramatic dialogue a long conversation with his mother, the Empress Frederick, in which the latter advocates the partition of Turkey (page 352). In her son's opinion, 'her point of view was on the whole clearly thought out' and corresponded with that of the Queen and Lord Salisbury. Radolin,[1] who had been transferred from Constantinople to St. Petersburg, reported that the Queen was in private correspondence with the Emperor and Empress of Russia about Armenia [2] but that the Russian Government, while pretending to co-operate with England, 'has been hinting every possible encouragement to the Sultan not to take the Armenian reforms too seriously' (pages 346–7). 'Not a pretty story,' is the Kaiser's comment and there is no evidence in this correspondence that the Germans gave similar hints. But we cannot help remembering their dislike of any understanding between England, France and Russia, and we find the Emperor writing in October, 1895, that England's policy

[1] He was succeeded at Constantinople by Baron Saurma Jeltsch, of whom the Kaiser does not seem to have had a high opinion. See pp. 363–4.

[2] Queen Victoria certainly wrote a personal letter to the Sultan about Armenia. It was delivered through the Embassy at Constantinople.

in Armenia was incomprehensible and that ' this feeling among the nations had led to their all without exception being filled with a strong mistrust of England ' (page 349). The suspicion is inevitable that this German view of England's isolation and her inability or unwillingness to take any decisive action must have been known to the Sultan and have had some effect in emboldening him to order the Armenian massacres which began in the autumn of 1895. None of the Powers were willing to interfere either separately or jointly. But the attitude of the Germans at Constantinople remained apparently correct. In November, 1895, Lord Salisbury thanked the German Government for the language used by their Ambassador to the Sultan which he thought had produced an excellent effect (page 357). In the same month the Chancellor comments at length on our policy (page 354). ' The various British schemes,' he says, ' the naval demonstration (since negatived), a European mandate to be offered to Russia, and finally the partition of Turkey have but one object, to leave it to other Powers to see to the restriction of Russian expansion, England being relieved of the task.' Yet though our attitude, as the Chancellor saw it, appeared to him reprehensible, it is noticeable that he recommends for Germany a similar policy of keeping in the background and pushing others forward. ' The most practical way out from the British point of view would be unquestionably a second Congress of Berlin. The first one cut down Russia's claims, prevented an Anglo-Russian war, and turned Russia's hatred against Germany—three successes for England,' and he earnestly dissuades the Kaiser against a repetition of the Congress, with which advice His Majesty cordially agrees. ' I shall never let myself in for another.' Nor, continues Prince Hohenlohe, should the Triple Alliance adopt a settled attitude regarding the Dardanelles before England does so, it would be very unpleasant if Germany had to choose between the alternatives of giving armed assistance to her friends Italy and Austria or of letting the Franco-Russian group first deal with those two Powers successfully and then turn its attention to an isolated Germany. This caution is very like England's unwillingness to commit herself.

In reading these most interesting papers one naturally wonders how far the temper which they reveal in both England and Germany leads up to and explains the Great War. The cause of friction is twofold. To a certain extent England stands in the way of German interests in colonial questions. But this grievance is only beginning to be felt. The constant complaint rather is that our action in international matters is independent and incalculable. If England would only do something irrevocable which would give her a fixed place among Germany's assistants

all might be well, but she remains free. No one can predict what she will do next and she has no fixed policy except selfishness. This leads to misunderstandings in every sense of that word. Intellectually German explanations of British motives are often wrong and, apart from their incorrectness, they generally had disastrous consequences, for they tended to promote suspicion and dislike. We notice too the beginnings of another German habit which became familiar later. Any action disagreeable to German interests is met with almost theatrical haughtiness, as if outraged majesty asked, how dare people forget their proper places in this way? Thus after the Jameson Raid the German Ambassador in London received a telegram from his Government saying: 'If you have the impression that this infraction of International Law is approved, you will ask for your passports. If the inroad into the Transvaal is disapproved, you will ask by what means the British Government intends to repair this breach of the law' (page 377). The mildness of Lord Salisbury's reply is almost amusing (page 381): 'He asked me as a friend', Count Hatzfeldt reports, 'to say nothing to him in this matter which could be construed as a threat, as that would make everything impossible for him. He added very confidentially that the Raid was in fact greatly disliked by him.' The Ambassador adds that 'it seems right to assume that they are honest about the affair here'.

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GERMAN DIPLOMATIC DOCUMENTS 1871-1914

GERMAN DIPLOMATIC DOCUMENTS

CHAPTER I

THE BALKAN QUESTION, 1890

[On March 20th, 1890, Prince Bismarck retired from the position of Chancellor of the German Empire. He was succeeded by Count George Leo von Caprivi. Count Herbert Bismarck also resigned the position of Secretary of State and was succeeded by Baron von Marschall.[1] These events produced an immediate and important change in regard to the relations between Germany and Russia. The Secret Treaty of Re-insurance between Germany and Russia, which had been signed in June, 1887, was due to terminate in 1890 (for the text, see Pribram's *The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary*, 1879–1914, Vol. I, p. 274 et seq.). On March 17th, Count Shouvaloff, the Russian Ambassador at Berlin, had approached Prince Bismarck on behalf of his Government with a proposal that the Treaty should be renewed for six years. This was the first question which had to be dealt with by Bismarck's successors and, eventually, after careful consideration, it was determined not to renew the Treaty.

Although the negotiations and discussions did not directly affect the British Government, which like all other Governments was ignorant of the very existence of the Treaty, none the less the eventual importance of this decision in its effect on the whole foreign policy and position of the German Empire, and therefore on its relations to Great Britain, make it necessary to include some reference to it.

The memorandum (see below) by Count Caprivi, the new Imperial Chancellor, sums up the reasons why the Russo-German Secret Treaty had better be allowed to lapse.]

German Note.

Herr von Schweinitz was summoned by the Emperor from St. Petersburg to Berlin on March 21st, 1890, to attend the investiture of Prince George of England with the Order of the Black Eagle. The Prince of Wales (afterwards King Edward VII) was also present.[2] Schweinitz's arrival coincided with the negotiations over the Treaty of Re-insurance. To begin with he was in favour of an extension. Nevertheless, Berchem and Holstein succeeded in putting him against it, chiefly by the argument of the Treaty with Roumania of 1883, which did not seem to the Ambassador to be reconcilable with the Treaty of Re-insurance. On March 28th Holstein still imagined that Schweinitz was a supporter of the Russian

[1] Cf. Gooch and Temporley, *British Documents*, I, p. 44.
[2] See Sir S. Lee in *King Edward VII*, I, 660.

Treaty, and—what for him meant the same thing—a partisan of the Bismarcks, and that he desired to restore them to power by means of the Treaty. (Cf. a characteristic article by Holstein (Vindex Scrutator) in *Der Tag* of November 4th, 1920, 2nd Edition (red), entitled 'Why the Russian Cord snapped'.) Holstein was the moving force behind the policy of non-renewal of the Treaty, for it was he who, while Count Herbert Bismarck was still in office, and without his knowledge, showed the text of the Treaty first to Caprivi, then to Marschall and finally to Schweinitz, together with those other Treaties, which in his opinion could not be harmonised with it. This is proved by a later Memorandum by Marschall (December 4th, 1911) upon the question of the Straits, which says: 'When, after Prince Bismarck's fall, there was talk of putting me in Herbert Bismarck's place as Secretary of State, I heard of the Secret Treaty of Re-insurance with Russia, which was due to expire shortly, and which Russia desired to see extended. It was only then that Herr von Holstein showed me this Treaty. When I read in it how we promised the Russians, in pretty plain language, the Straits and Constantinople as the price of Russian neutrality in certain given cases of war, I told Holstein that I would not accept the Foreign Office if this Treaty was renewed, because I saw in it disloyalty to Austria-Hungary. I added that a great man like Bismarck might work with such complicated instruments, but that I, a simple man, could not justify such a Treaty to our Allies, should it ever become known. Caprivi was of the same opinion.'

VII. 10

Memorandum by the Chancellor, Count Caprivi, *March 28th*, 1890

Yesterday the undersigned and General von Schweinitz (Ambassador in St. Petersburg) held a conversation with His Majesty over the possible renewal of the Secret Treaty with Russia. They came to the unanimous conclusion that such a renewal would incapacitate Russia from entering into a coalition, but that the provisions of the Treaty, in spirit, if not in letter, could not well be harmonised with the Triple Alliance, with the Treaties between Roumania and ourselves, or with the influence that Germany exercises upon England. Leakage of the Treaty, whether through a calculated or through an accidental indiscretion, would endanger the Triple Alliance and tend to alienate England from us. Herr von Schweinitz considered that an intentional indiscretion from the Russian side would be most improbable, not only because it would be out of keeping with the Emperor's character, but also because it would excite public opinion in Russia against the Government. He recognised, however, that the possibility of leakage from other directions could not be ruled out.

His Majesty hereupon directed the Ambassador, on his return to Russia, to explain in the proper quarters that the definite desire to maintain the best relations with Russia persists here as it did before, but that the reason why we consider it wiser to

abstain from renewing the Treaty is to be sought in the change of personnel that has just taken place in Germany. This inclines us to go slowly for the time being and to keep clear of far-reaching engagements.

VII. 24

MEMORANDUM BY KIDERLEN, GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *May 20th*, 1890

The importance attached by Russia, as well as by England, to the passage from the Ægean to the Black Sea is clearly shown by the declarations made at the Congress of Berlin by the representatives of both States. The difference of the interests of Russia on the one hand and England on the other with regard to the opening and closing of the Straits is also brought out.[1]

At the 18th Session Lord Salisbury made the following declaration regarding the Protocol:—

'Considérant que le Traité de Berlin changera une partie importante des arrangements sanctionnés par le Traité de Paris de 1856, et que l'interprétation de l'article II. du Traité de Londres, qui dépend du Traité de Paris, peut ainsi être sujet à des contestations,

'Je déclare de la part de l'Angleterre que les obligations de Sa Majesté Britannique concernant la clôture des Détroits se bornent à un engagement envers le Sultan de respecter à cet égard les déterminations indépendantes de Sa Majesté, conformes à l'esprit des Traités existants.'

At the 19th Session following, Count Shouvaloff declared:—

'Les Plénipotentiaires de Russie, sans pouvoir se rendre exactement compte de la proposition de M. le Second Plénipotentiaire de la Grande Bretagne concernant la clôture des Détroits, se bornent à demander de leur côté l'insertion au Protocol de l'observation, qu'à leur avis, le principe de la clôture des Détroits est un principe européen, et que les stipulations conclues à cet égard en 1846, 1856 et 1871, confirmées actuellement par le Traité de Berlin, sont obligatoires de la part de toutes les Puissances, conformément à l'esprit et à la lettre des Traités existants, non seulement vis-à-vis du Sultan, mais encore vis-à-vis de toute les Puissances signataires à ces transactions.'

The difference between these points of view found expression when an outbreak of war threatened between England and Russia on account of Afghanistan in April and May, 1885. England's whole endeavour was directed towards obtaining free passage through the Dardanelles. To this end the British Statesmen first sought an alliance with Turkey, but without success. The value attached by England to the free passage is

[1] Cf. Vol. I, Chapter XIII.

shown by the price she was prepared to pay in offering Turkey occupation of Egypt and the Suez Canal, a free hand in Bulgaria and 25 million pounds; whilst, on the other hand, the Sultan was threatened with the complete cutting off of Egypt. As soon as Turkey's neutrality appeared probable, England combatted the contention of the other Powers that Turkey's neutrality involved the closing of the Straits, for this afforded Russia so great an advantage, that neutrality ought only to be considered as an obligation to keep the Straits open to both belligerents. At first Italy also maintained this view. She only dropped it under strong pressure from Berlin, with which Austria agreed.

The Powers at that time concurred in the Russian view that Turkish neutrality implied the closing of the Straits. This is, however, expressly recognised as favouring Russia.

On the basis of the secret Triple Alliance of 1881, which was renewed in 1884 (Par. 3 of art. 3), Germany and Austria, who were joined later by France and Italy, used their influence in Constantinople for a declaration of neutrality and the closing of the Dardanelles.

This was achieved and therewith the covering of the flank and rear of the Russian base in all Trans-Caspian operations against Herat, etc. Peace was maintained, and England began a diplomatic retreat. M. de Giers expressly acknowledged to Herr von Schweinitz, as did Prince Lobanoff to Count Kalnoky, that Russia's interests had been fully protected, and that peace had been maintained with diplomatic victory for Russia, by the closing of the Straits through German and Austrian influence.

Thus Russia obtained at that time through the Treaty à Trois everything which she now asks from us alone behind the backs of our Allies.

Germany and Austria even went the length of holding out to Russia the prospect of 'active pressure' on the Sultan in respect of neutrality, closing and future defence of the Straits.

The real point of view of Russia, who desired only the closing of the Straits and found the fortification of the Dardanelles to be quite natural, is shown by the fact that on May 18th, 1885, she lodged a complaint in Vienna that the Turks had used this opportunity to fortify the Bosphorus also. At the same time, according to Count Andrassy, the Emperor Alexander II had expressly stated to him that Russia had no intention of seizing the Straits.[1]

The closing of the Straits has a still further meaning. Russia declared repeatedly that the opening of them to foreign fleets amounted to a Turkish declaration of war against Russia. If

[1] Cf. Vol. I, 197 et seq.

we acknowledge the obligation to close, we must also accept the further consequence, consider the opening of the Straits as a declaration of war on Russia by Turkey and recognise Russia's right to attack and occupy any territory under the Sultan's sovereignty, including Bulgaria.

When we consented to exert our influence in Constantinople for the closing of the Straits in the event of an Anglo-Russian war, we were obviously acting in the interests of Russia against England. From this it followed that the idea of asking the Sultan to fortify the Dardanelles as well was declined, at any rate officially, as being too far-reaching a step. *It was done secretly,* ' because we could not act openly on account of England.' The proposal to claim in London and St. Petersburg recognition of the inviolability of the Straits as a treaty right, was deferred until actual outbreak of war, as being an anti-British move. The Turkish desire to have the entrance to the Straits policed by neutral ships was treated in the same way.

Again recently Lord Salisbury mentioned our attitude at that time to Count Hatzfeldt. He said: ' The Sultan let himself be persuaded by advice from Berlin to fortify the Dardanelles against us. That is the *most important factor* in the development of events. If you desire to make serious use of our common interests in the event of a Russian advance, it can be done by making that advice retrospective and taking every possible precaution against the Straits being closed against us in future.'

This shows clearly how a Russian indiscretion with regard to a German treaty guarantee of the inviolability of the Straits would react in London.

As regards Italy, we must remember that she took the British point of view in 1885, and only adopted ours reluctantly. Moreover, we have always referred her to England in all Mediterranean questions. Consequently the Italians cherish the idea of a demonstration against the Dardanelles by the combined fleets of England, Italy and Austria in the event of a Russian advance in the East. This we should be forced by our treaty obligations to oppose.

[Early in 1890 the knowledge that Russia was making war preparations in the Black Sea exercised the rest of the Powers, and, as the Chief of the Austrian General Staff remarked to Prince Henry VII of Reuss, German Ambassador in Vienna on March 19th, 1890, ' there had been at last success in interesting the British in the events in the Black Sea; up till now they had paid little attention to the preparations there.']

German Note.

In a despatch dated April 8th, 1890, Count Hatzfeldt was informed

that the British Ambassadors in St. Petersburg and Constantinople, Sir Robert Morier and Sir William White, agreed in thinking that Russia intended to take action against Bulgaria before the following summer. Hatzfeldt was instructed to find out the facts.

IX. 7

Count Hatzfeldt, in London, to the Chancellor, Caprivi, *April 14th*, 1890

At nearly every meeting with the Under-Secretary of State I mention amongst other subjects the situation in Bulgaria, in order to keep myself continuously informed as far as possible as to the news coming from there. Apart from the fact that the ever cautious attitude of the Bulgarian Government allows one to hope for tranquillity at home and avoidance of provocation abroad, there is at present no serious symptom of any hostile intentions against Bulgaria by other Powers. The competent military authorities here consider there is no immediate intention of military action underlying the Russian landing practice in the Black Sea, but that it is an indication of the gradual and continuous carrying out of a general military plan, the final completion of which will certainly later cause some anxiety to the rest of the Powers. (The Emperor William II : ' *It does so already.*') For this reason they deplore the obstinate apathy of the Sultan regarding the erection of extensive fortifications towards the Black Sea. At present, however, there seems to be no immediate danger. In this connection, Sir Philip Currie believes that the Emperor Alexander's peaceloving nature, which daily becomes more and more apparent, must be recognised as a special guarantee.

I said that I strongly agreed with this view and used the opportunity to remark that Sir Robert Morier was too acute an observer to make a mistake about the Russian Government's intentions. Sir Philip Currie replied that every report of Sir Robert's expressed the same opinion and betrayed no anxiety as to any active measures on the part of Russia in the immediate future. In this conversation I was able to refer again to the situation in Constantinople and to Sir William White's influential position there. The Under-Secretary's observations indicated that his reports equally did not produce the impression here that he held that any active measures by Russia are probable just yet.

I shall postpone a further report until the return of the Prime Minister. My long acquaintance with him tells me that I can discuss such questions with him in perfect confidence and much more frankly than I should consider advisable with Sir Philip Currie.

I beg to remark here that Lord Salisbury has during the last months not paid any special attention to events in Bulgaria, and has confined himself to advising Sofia confidentially to observe moderation and to avoid provocation abroad. Throughout my official connection with him, the Prime Minister has acted on the principle that England must always leave the initiative to Austria in the political handling of the Bulgarian problem. I think that I may assume that in future also he will, broadly speaking, treat Count Kalnoky's view on this question as the decisive one, so long as Vienna refrains from making demands here more or less in favour of the momentary interests of Bulgaria, which may seem to the British Government to threaten the maintenance of peace. I beg to recall the Austrian demand for the recognition desired by Bulgaria, which was rejected in Constantinople. Lord Salisbury then frankly expressed his objections to the Austrian Government.[1]

IX. 13

BARON VON MARSCHALL, FOREIGN SECRETARY IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *April 26th*, 1890

Confidential.

I have the honour to send you the enclosed copy of a report by the Imperial Ambassador in Constantinople of the 22nd inst., describing the Sultan's anxiety regarding Russian intentions in Bulgaria.

I beg that you will discuss the contents of this report with Rustem Pacha. Your intimate knowledge of the Eastern situation, fortified by your perusal of the documents during your stay here, will make it easy for you to convince the Turkish Ambassador that under present conditions a rapprochement of Bulgaria with Servia is out of the question, and that it is much more likely that the Bulgarians, whose sympathy with Russia exists only in the imaginations of Russian Chauvinists, will cultivate reserve against Russian aspirations in Constantinople, rather than seek Russian support for a hostile attitude towards Turkey. This at any rate would apply to the present Bulgarian Government, whose dismissal Turkey has therefore no reason for desiring.

We shall not alter our policy of moderation in Bulgarian affairs. This will not exclude our pointing out actual mistakes of the Sultan in his treatment of Bulgaria, and I assume that the best channel for approaching the Sultan will be through Rustem Pacha. We also consider here that you may fairly make known to the latter our absolute determination to maintain the Triple Alliance.

[1] Cf. Schultheiss' *Europäischer Geschichtskalender* for 1890, p. 293.

You are further authorised to make use of the contents of the enclosure confidentially with Lord Salisbury and to enquire his views and information regarding the intentions of Russia in the Balkans in the near and far future and also regarding the mutual relations of the different Balkan States.

IX. 14

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *April 30th*, 1890

Cipher telegram.

Lord Salisbury informed me in strict confidence that the Sultan's anxiety regarding Bulgaria is not entirely groundless. The Bulgarian Government had recently made secret overtures to M. Tricoupis (Greece) for a political understanding, which the latter appeared to have rejected.

Lord Salisbury urgently requests that this communication be kept quite secret.

IX. 14

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *May 2nd*, 1890

Very confidential.

I beg you to thank Lord Salisbury for the interesting communication described in your telegram of the 30th, and to ask if he would authorise us to make confidential use of it in Vienna.

Here also we have remarked the presence of the Bulgarian Agent, Vulkovitch, in Athens. The reason given officially is the settlement of certain current matters. But we have so far had neither from Athens nor Constantinople any definite report of the real object of the mission.

A Greco-Bulgarian understanding is in itself unlikely, owing to conflicting interests in Macedonia. Nor would this be a subject of anxiety for the Triple Alliance or for England, as an anti-Russian Bulgaria allied to Greece, which is by nature anti-Slav, would probably seek British and Austrian support, and would form a useful counter-weight against a Serbo-Montenegrin combination with Slav aspirations. . . .

Lord Salisbury declared that the proposal originated in Bulgaria, so that it can be assumed with certainty that Bulgaria is thinking of a dual understanding, to the exclusion of Servia and Montenegro. But the Greek refusal of the Bulgarian offer suggests that Greece may perhaps already be bound to the Slav side and may have come to firm agreements with Servia and Montenegro—perhaps under Russian auspices. The Press has frequently mentioned such a combination. There are no positive

proofs of its existence, but nevertheless there are various indications. Amongst these, in addition to the rejection of the Bulgarian offer, I reckon the long stay of Vucovitch, the Montenegrin Minister, in Belgrade, and the Greekophil attitude lately assumed by Russia on the Cretan question, as opposed to her hesitations hitherto.

[Turkey had abrogated certain important provisions in the Constitution of Crete, which was granted under the Pact of Halepa, 1878. This caused an insurrection in the Island and aroused great indignation in Greece.]

It would be of interest to me to learn the views of yourself and Lord Salisbury on the foregoing points. He may possibly have received more accurate information from Sir William White, who cultivates relations in many directions with all the Balkan States and especially with Greece.

In any case the fact of the Bulgarian initiative proves that the Principality is trying by every means to escape from its present situation. . . . The present Government at Sofia will be forced to get help and support wherever it can—even at the risk of a general conflict. Just now this would be undesired by us on technical military grounds. . . .

I must leave you to judge how far and in what form you can make use of the foregoing with Lord Salisbury.

I await with special interest your report of the impressions you receive in conversation with the British Prime Minister.

IX. 16

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *May 2nd*, 1890

I have not failed to discuss confidentially with Lord Salisbury your despatch of April 26th, describing the Sultan's anxiety concerning Bulgaria.

His words have left me with the decided impression that he neither believes in the possibility of a political understanding between the Balkan States, Bulgaria and Servia, nor regards as conceivable any isolated military action by Russia against Bulgaria. He frankly expressed his opinion that when Russia considered the moment ripe for action, she would advance directly on the Bosphorus and Constantinople.

I found the Prime Minister imperfectly informed regarding the manœuvre in Constantinople designed to alarm the Sultan into taking action against Prince Ferdinand, with the prospect of an alliance between the four Balkan States, and so to turn him away from the Triple Alliance. He listened to me with interest and also agreed with me that the Sultan should be made to understand as clearly as possible the object of the manœuvre

and the incorrectness of the reasons suggested, but he displayed little hope of any real success for the efforts directed to this end. He has himself but a very poor opinion of the Sultan, as I have often before reported, but even Sir William White, the Minister informed me confidentially, is clearly quite discouraged about it and has almost ceased to believe in the possibility of exercising a wholesome influence and leading the Sultan into the right path.

Lord Salisbury was not optimistic about bringing future pressure to bear at Sofia. He said that M. Stambouloff was obstinate and paid but little attention to the advice that was offered to him. In this connection the Minister informed me in strict confidence that M. Vulcovitch's secret overtures, made to M. Tricoupis under instructions from the Bulgarian Minister, had apparently been rejected on the grounds that he (Tricoupis) must continue to maintain good relations with Turkey. The Minister left it uncertain whether M. Tricoupis had spoken the whole truth and was not deeper involved than he admitted. At any rate his inference from this action is that the Sultan's anxiety regarding a hostile attitude on Bulgaria's part is not altogether unfounded.

All the Prime Minister's words made it clear that he considers the possibility of Russian action against Constantinople to be the decisive point in the future, and I used this as a suitable occasion to introduce confidentially the contents of your despatch on the military situation in Turkey. Lord Salisbury does not hold out much hope of influencing the Sultan in this matter. He assumes that fear of Russia's displeasure is hindering him from pressing on with the defensive positions on the Bosphorus. But Lord Salisbury recognises that an attempt must at least be made to urge the Sultan on to greater diligence in the matter, and I have no doubt that he will instruct Sir William White confidentially in this sense.

My general impression was that in the present situation in the East the British Prime Minister expects but little success for diplomatic action either in Constantinople or in the smaller Balkan States, and that in his opinion, when the great crisis arrives in the East, all will depend on the military action of those States which then decide to oppose the Russian advance. I believe that his mind is fully prepared to see Russia press with all her forces at the decisive moment right up to Constantinople and oblige the Sultan, either by force or by treaty, to entrust to her the protection of the Dardanelles.

(Caprivi: '*How is she to do this? It is no good through Armenia, and although they might land* 16,000 *men, these could do nothing against the Turks, until the Russian ships were sent back to return with another* 16,000. *I consider that the Russians cannot*

undertake the risk of a war with the sea as its base, as it would mean Greece, Bulgaria, etc., going to war at the same time. It is unthinkable that all these States could mobilise without its being known beforehand.')

With this in mind Lord Salisbury pointed out that the British Mediterranean Fleet had been nearly doubled and could be at the entrance of the Dardanelles in 48 hours. It would not be impossible to force these.

(CAPRIVI: '*It is about* 600 *miles from Malta to the Dardanelles. The fleet must contain only ships of speed above the average to accomplish this distance in* 48 *hours. Now all the ships are not always in port, and they are not all full of coal. Add to this the communication of orders and other minor difficulties combined—it will certainly take considerably more than* 48 *hours.*')

The British Government's ability to order the fleet to act, when the time comes, will, in my humble opinion, first depend on whether Austria shows the necessary determination and energy to oppose the Russian advance.

IX. 26

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *May 8th*, 1890

Very confidential.

In answer to the despatch of May 2nd.

Yesterday in strict confidence I discussed fully with Lord Salisbury the situation in the East, on the basis of the material supplied to me. I repeatedly emphasised the point that the first consideration for us is ever the maintenance of European peace. As I expected, I met with complete agreement on the Minister's part, as he, in order to remain in harmony with public opinion here, is insistent on avoiding any course likely to provoke or hasten the beginning of a crisis in the East and the resulting disturbance of European peace.

The Prime Minister considers in general that the deciding factor is the development of affairs in Bulgaria and that any happenings in Greece, Servia or Montenegro, or between these States, are of secondary importance. In his opinion Bulgaria is the only important or alarming factor in a military sense among the lesser Balkan States, so that the question on which side the weight of her army will be thrown is bound to decide Russia's action also. On this assumption the possible fall of Prince Ferdinand and therefore of M. Stambouloff, supposing neither could maintain themselves any longer, would produce a dangerous situation since Russia, who now exercises a more or less paramount influence over Servia and Montenegro and with

Bulgaria's help might perhaps succeed in paralysing Roumania, might then consider both Austria's and the Sultan's position to be so far weakened as to decide her (Russia) to make a direct attack on Constantinople.

I must add at once that Lord Salisbury will only believe in a direct attack on Constantinople, if Bulgaria is driven into the arms of Russia by the fall of Prince Ferdinand. He assumes that in Petersburg it has for long been realised that the road to Constantinople is via Vienna, and that this opinion will be adhered to, so long as no change in favour of Russia takes place in Bulgaria. Should Russia consider that the moment for action had arrived, although lacking the assurance of Bulgarian support, the first blow in this direction must necessarily be delivered against Galicia.

Although Lord Salisbury thinks the maintenance of existing conditions in Sofia important in consideration of a possible direct advance by Russia against Constantinople, he has by no means so far made up his mind what steps, if any, could be taken with prospect of success and without grave risk, in order to strengthen Bulgaria's present inclination in favour of maintaining peace, and to guard her Government against a dangerous leap from the straight path. He sees only two ways in which M. Stambouloff could be assisted, by (1) recognition of the Prince by all the Powers except Russia and France and (2) Bulgarian independence. Both courses appear to him extremely risky, the first, because Russia would take it as a direct and probably intolerable provocation, and the second, because it would offend the Sultan and perhaps drive him still further on to the side of Russia.

Lord Salisbury, who, as I have already reported, no longer believes in the Bulgarian overtures at Athens,[1] will nevertheless give serious consideration to the question of the treatment of Bulgaria and discuss it further with me.

The attitude of the other small Balkan States appears to the Minister to be of no great importance, partly because he considers them—Greece, for instance—relatively insignificant in a military sense, and partly because he thinks that the strength of Pan-Slavism, particularly in Albania, which is opposed to their aspirations, has been underestimated. Nor does he believe in the serious possibility of an understanding between Montenegro, Servia and Greece directed against Turkey, a basis on which Greece certainly would hardly build up an understanding with Russia in the East. Also he does not imagine that the possible acquisition of Crete, the Sultan's consent to which in all probability would not be obtained by amicable means *before* the outbreak of war, would have any great effect on Greek policy.

[1] Cf. p. 8.

On the whole, therefore, the Minister is inclined to the opinion that it is advisable for the present to wait for and observe calmly the movements of the lesser Balkan States.

The Minister's utterances on the state of affairs in Turkey seem to me now of the utmost importance. He hopes for very little from the Sultan, as Your Excellency knows. He certainly does not expect him to make military preparations for the crisis nor to fortify the Black Sea against Russian aggression. The question arose between us, what would happen if such a crisis came to a head. Lord Salisbury said: 'If he calls us, we shall come; we can do no more than that.' 'May I,' I said, 'report your words? How do you conceive the case of the Sultan being definitely prevented by some sudden action on the part of the Russians from seeking your help?' Lord Salisbury answered: 'You may make use of my words in Berlin. We are bound by treaty to come, if the Sultan summons us.' He then expatiated on the difficulties which will be placed in the way of efficient help from England by the fortification and arming of the Dardanelles, and added finally: 'It was owing to advice from Berlin that the Sultan was led into fortifying the Dardanelles against us.[1] It is, however, the main point in the development of the situation. If you seriously desire to serve our common interests against aggression by Russia, this would be effected by your taking back that advice and by your ensuring by every possible means that we do not find the door shut, when the time comes.' . . .

IX. 31

Memorandum by the Chancellor, Caprivi, in Berlin, *May 11th*, 1890

Extract.

It is clear that if Russia chose to attack Constantinople by sea, so as to bring the Eastern question to bear directly on the Balkan Peninsula, the attitude adopted by England might in itself exercise great influence, but this influence would be reduced if England were to wait until summoned by Turkey. The question is whether there will be anyone in the terrified Constantinople to make the decision, or with the courage to send out a cry for help. If England thinks it worth while to maintain her influence in the Mediterranean, I consider that she cannot allow it to depend on a call for assistance on the part of the Turks. It is in the Turkish nature to postpone such a call as long as possible; and when at last the cry of terror arises in the throat, the hand might be already there to stifle it. I consider that England ought to send her Mediterranean Squadron to the

[1] Cf. Vol. I, p. 197.

Dardanelles at the first sign of preparations for embarkation in the Black Sea. It is for the Naval authorities to determine whether the Turkish forts on the Dardanelles would really seriously impede the passage of this squadron. Ours consider that the coastal batteries are in no condition to interfere with the British Fleet, once it is determined to force the passage. Even if mines and torpedo-boats were brought into action by the defenders—and this is practically excluded under a Turkish régime and if the British arrive unexpectedly—a British success would still be probable. I think that if the Straits fell into Russian hands, and if then Italy decided to come to terms with Russia and France, England's claims in the Mediterranean would be greatly endangered. Should this risk be run whilst waiting for a call from Turkey? In my opinion England could only take a different view of the matter, if at the same time war were to break out between France and Italy. Then the first duty of the British Mediterranean squadron would be to unite with the Italian Fleet for the destruction of the Toulon fleet. The Italians by themselves could hardly succeed there and the Austrians could not help them. Once a decisive blow is struck at the French Fleet in the Mediterranean, England's most serious rival in the command of the Mediterranean is removed, and the importance of the Russian Fleet for this object will then count for nothing.

As regards ourselves, I consider that our only grounds for taking an interest in the improvement of the Turkish defences on the Bosphorus, which, by the way, after the completion of the works at present under construction, will no longer be unimportant, will be if England leaves us in no doubt as to her fixed intention to intervene, of her own initiative, against any attempt on Russia's part to land on the soil of Turkey-in-Europe. Without this assurance we should, by influencing Turkey in the sense mentioned above, merely be exposing Turkey to the danger of a Russian veto on any further work on the forts. We should probably injure Turkey's political situation, and, much against our inclination, bring war nearer. It is not in our interests to goad Russia into a premature decision on the Bosphorus, the results of which would fall on us in Poland or Lithuania. If we did at one time give advice, which led to the fortification of the Dardanelles, it is quite explicable to me that Lord Salisbury may have been annoyed by it, and I should be prepared to refrain from influencing Turkey still further in this direction. On the other hand, however, I should not consider it advisable to interest ourselves in the strengthening of the Bosphorus, as formerly we did in that of the Dardanelles. We should merely slip into similar uncomfortable relations with Russia.

Our more correct course, in my opinion, will be to urge Roumania to press forward with her defences on the Sereth, so as to make the road by land towards Bulgaria less practicable for Russia, since the latter cannot do without Bulgaria in a war in the East on a large scale, rather than to risk our good relations with Russia, in order to clear England's maritime course of obstructions, which are probably not as serious as they appear. We have no direct interests to watch over either in Bulgaria or Turkey, but our treaty with Roumania binds us to defend her and obliges us to see to it that Roumania is strengthened. Every shot on the Pruth is a call to us to stand to our arms, whilst we should be unmoved by a Russian landing on the South-west coast of the Black Sea. England's interests are just the contrary. A revolution in Bulgaria might leave us cold, as long as it did not endanger the general peace. Even if a change took place in Bulgaria in favour of Russia, I think that the saying that Russia's road to Constantinople goes through Vienna would prove correct, at least as long as the German-Austrian Alliance with Roumania lasts. I agree with Lord Salisbury regarding the lesser Balkan States—their weight does not count for much.

I sum up my views finally as follows: the efficacy of British action in the East will not be injured by the fortifying of the Dardanelles and the like, but rather by inferiority in military strength and lack of definite aims. She will certainly act too late if she makes her action against a Russian landing dependent on the attitude of Austria. We have no intention of pulling England's chestnuts out of the fire for her.

IX. 33

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *May 15th*, 1890

Secret.

Your report of May 8th has prompted the Chancellor to write a Memorandum, a copy of which I enclose. The contents are intended for your personal information exclusively.

Your reports as to Lord Salisbury's views on the possibility and probability of Russian action in the East, will always be of the greatest interest to us, and I hope, therefore, that when Lord Salisbury next re-opens the subject, you will discuss academically with him the questions contained in the Memorandum on the basis of your own knowledge and of the material forwarded to you from here. I need not emphasise the fact that we must avoid giving the impression in England of having recently changed our Eastern policy, and in particular of desiring to abandon our passive attitude, as observed hitherto, thus giving England a reason for taking steps of any kind in those parts.

IX. 34

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *May 14th*, 1890

Confidential.

I informed Your Excellency in my report of May 8th that in Lord Salisbury's opinion the fortifying of the Dardanelles by the Turks will place difficulties in the way of eventual action by the British fleet, and that he ascribes the original suggestion of strengthening and arming these works to our initiative in Constantinople.[1] The Prime Minister now informs me that he remembers discussing the subject in 1885 with the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, Count Karolyi, who then definitely admitted to him that the fortifying of the Dardanelles was the result of combined pressure by Russia, Austria and *Germany*, and on the advice of German officers then in the service of the Porte.

The Minister added that he had received reliable information from St. Petersburg that the Russian Government had placed a large order for cavalry saddles—about 40,000—with Russian firms.

IX. 35

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *May 19th*, 1890

Confidential.

In your despatch of 14th inst., you referred to Lord Salisbury's statement that Germany, in combination with Austria and Russia, successfully urged Turkey to fortify the Dardanelles in 1885.

I am prompted to recapitulate shortly the facts, which are in part known to Your Excellency.[2]

When at the end of April and beginning of May, 1885, a war between England and Russia about Afghanistan appeared possible and even probable, the first and most important question for the neutral Powers was the attitude which Turkey would assume towards an Anglo-Russian conflict, supposing that war proved inevitable. All the neutral Powers, not only those mentioned by Lord Salisbury, but France and Italy also, were in agreement that the complete neutrality of Turkey alone could prevent a wide extension of the war and a possible European conflagration. In this sense the above-mentioned five Powers combined to urge neutrality on the Sultan. The latter then determined to declare his neutrality in the event of an outbreak of war. But this implied an obligation upon Turkey to close

[1] Cf. Vol. I, p. 197.
[2] Cf. Vol. I, Chapter XIII.

the Straits. An attempt was made on England's part to interpret Turkey's obligation of neutrality, as meaning that the Straits must be open to the Fleets of both belligerents; but this explanation was universally rejected as untenable.

We, therefore, as did all the other Powers with the exception of England, informed the Sultan that neutrality involved the obligation to close the Straits. We did[2] not advise that they should be fortified. On the contrary, when a question was asked from the other side whether such advice should be given to the Sultan, Herr von Radowitz was instructed by telegram on April 21st, 1885, that ' this was in excess of Prince Bismarck's intentions.' [1]

But it was most natural for the Sultan to consider for himself what attitude he should adopt, supposing that one of the belligerents should fail to respect his neutrality and attempt to force the Straits. Knowing that if he were not in a position to repel any such attempt by force, reprisals were to be expected from the other side, he despatched a Commission on his own initiative to examine the condition of the forts on the Dardanelles and Bosphorus. The Commission included, amongst others, von der Goltz and Ristow, Prussian officers in the service of the Porte. Von der Goltz drew up a report on the work of the Commission to the effect that ' neither the batteries nor the torpedo defences could deter a British fleet from passing through, if it was determined to do so.' As a matter of fact no measures of defence were then taken, and since then I know that more work has been done on the forts on the Bosphorus than on the Dardanelles. So that it is a question whether the Bosphorus forts are not more of a menace to the weaker Russia Black-Sea fleet than those on the Dardanelles to the stronger British Mediterranean fleet. . . .

IX. 36

Count Hatzfeldt, in London, to the Chancellor, Caprivi, *May 23rd*, 1890

Confidential.

I have mentioned the contents of the despatch of May 19th in strict confidence to Lord Salisbury with reference to former conversations. The Minister received my exposition with quite particular interest, and he especially noted our view that more work had been done on the Bosphorus defences than on those of the Dardanelles since 1885, and that it would be proportionately easier for the British to pass the Dardanelles than for the Russians to force a passage through the Bosphorus.

Up till now it appears that on the first point Lord Salisbury

[1] Vol. I, p. 199.

had assumed the opposite, whilst he agrees that even with the Dardanelles forts in their present condition it would not be impossible for the British squadron as now constituted to force them. Lord Salisbury did not on this occasion express a further wish that we should employ our influence in Constantinople for the purpose of facilitating the passage of the Dardanelles for England on a future occasion, and I, for my part, did not mention the subject.

IX. 41

German Note.

On May 29th, 1890, Radowitz, Ambassador in Constantinople, was instructed to have a general report on the military value of the defences of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus prepared by Colonel von der Goltz. [His conclusion was that the first to appear before Constantinople would be master of the situation, and that a combined Mediterranean squadron should be ready at Tenedos to pass the Dardanelles at the first sign of troops being embarked at Odessa and Sebastopol.] The Chancellor's remark on von der Goltz's report is as follows : ' I fully agree with Colonel von der Goltz's views and request that the document be communicated to London and Rome, with the omission of the sketches and the name of the compiler.'

IX. 42

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *July 16th*, 1890

In the course of conversation with Lord Salisbury to-day the Turkish situation came under discussion. I mentioned some words of Sir William White's [1] (Ambassador in Constantinople), whom I yesterday met at Windsor. He gave a very unfavourable account of the Sultan, saying that there was nothing more to be done with him, as his fear of the Russians was driving him more and more under their influence. (The EMPEROR : ' *If White says that, it is worth noting, for he knows the conditions intimately.*') Lord Salisbury agreed with the Ambassador's view and came at once to the subject of the Dardanelles.

He considers that if it comes to a crisis in the East, three courses are possible.

Either the Sultan may summon the British to his assistance, in which case the passage of the Dardanelles will present no difficulties ;

Or, influenced by Russia, he may forbid the British to pass through and withstand them by military force ; then it might be difficult to force a passage ; (The EMPEROR : ' *Easy by night.*')

Or—and this course seemed to the Prime Minister the most probable—the Sultan may do nothing, neither inviting the English nor withstanding them ; then the passage might be possible. (The

[1] Cf. Sir A. Hardinge, *A Diplomatist in the East*, p. 9.

EMPEROR: '*Or, the Russians may appear with their fleet suddenly before Constantinople, seize that and proceed direct to the Dardanelles, where, in conjunction with the batteries, which the Sultan, under durance, would order to give assistance to the Russians, they could deny passage to the English, if only a part of the Mediterranean squadron was sent.*')

There is special interest in Lord Salisbury's remark that a part of the Mediterranean squadron will receive instructions to organise themselves so as to reach the Dardanelles in 48 hours. (The EMPEROR: '*How many and from where?*')

He also said that in January this year the Sultan had allowed three Russian gun-boats, albeit without armament, to pass through the Dardanelles to the Black Sea. (The EMPEROR: '*!!!*') As the armament for them was already awaiting their arrival in a Russia Black Sea port, Russia would be able, if this were repeated, to assemble as big a fleet as they chose in the Black Sea. He, Lord Salisbury, had protested at Constantinople against this action regarding Russian war-ships, but had so far received no reply.

Finally I will report a confidential remark made to me at Windsor yesterday by Sir William White. He had received information from a reliable source in Constantinople that Nelidoff wished shortly to offer the Sultan a Commercial Treaty, whereby in future Russian transports were to be allowed through the Dardanelles without question. (The EMPEROR: '*These could easily effect a sudden landing by night.*') Sir William expects more exact information on the subject, and will inform me at once of it.

IX. 44

THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *July 31st*, 1890

Extract.

In order to judge of the future, we must wait and see whether Sir William White will make successful use of the Sultan's fears for his purposes and will prove to him that compliance with Russia's demands is more risky than refusal. . . .

I beg you to keep me informed on the questions mentioned in your report (of July 16th) and especially whether the Sultan is really allowing Russian transports through the Dardanelles.

IX. 45

COUNT HATZFELDT, AT OSBORNE, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *August 7th*, 1890

Telegram.

Lord Salisbury informs me that he wishes to lodge a protest

at Constantinople against the known permission given for Russian ships to pass the Straits, and to request the support of Italy, Austria and Germany through the respective British Ambassadors.

I observed to him provisionally in confidence that Germany's participation in such a step would seem inadvisable, as it would especially injure our peculiar position in regard to this question in St. Petersburg and lead to difficulties, which Lord Salisbury himself would consider undesirable in the interests of peace.

The Prime Minister did not deny this, and my impression is that he would be quite content with a friendly reserve on our side. He intends also, as he admitted to me finally, to demand free passage for British ships on the grounds of the permission granted to the Russians.

Please telegraph me instructions. Lord Salisbury and I are here until Saturday morning. On the following Wednesday he probably starts for a French watering-place for several weeks' holiday.

IX. 46–7

THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, AT OSBORNE, *August 8th*, 1890

Telegram.

Your telegram of August 8th regarding the Straits received and answered provisionally.

For your confidential information and as a basis for discussion, as you think fit :—

To join in a protest in Constantinople, to be directed against Russia, without affecting our own interests, would, in view of maintaining friendly relations with Russia, be out of the question for us, and for Austria very questionable at a moment when Russia is conducting unusually extensive manœuvres on her frontier.

I know that during the Imperial visit to St. Petersburg declarations regarding the Straits, but in the opposite sense, are expected from us. If we previously take up a positive position on that question, a friendly arrangement in St. Petersburg will be rendered difficult.

If we remain free, we can stop all discussion in St. Petersburg with the intimation that we stand absolutely on the basis of the Treaties, the interpretation of which is not our affair, but that of all the Signatory Powers in common.

Your telegram shows that Lord Salisbury's intention is to demand the right of passage for British ships. I cannot judge whether England will be able to carry this through by herself, in view of the dangers threatening the Sultan—France's recent

attitude regarding Tripoli, the strengthening of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea, etc.

But we shall be unable to deny the justification for it, having during the Emperor's St. Petersburg visit declared our adherence to the Treaties of 1871 and 1878, which provide equal rights and equal treatment respecting the Straits for all Powers.

For this reason any refusal by the Sultan to let British ships through would react on the rights of the ships of other nations.

IX. 47

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *August 11th*, 1890

Telegram.

Lord Salisbury has held up the Circular to the British Representatives, which was already prepared, until the departure of the Emperor from St. Petersburg. In the meantime he will consider whether it will not be preferable to use the good offices of the friendly Powers for demanding free passage for British ships and for admonishing the Sultan concerning the interpretation of the Treaties, rather than to make an immediate protest. He will inform me confidentially of his decision in good time.

IX. 48

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *August 19th*, 1890

A confidential conversation with Sir Philip Currie convinces me that the intended Circular to the friendly Powers, requesting support for the British protest in Constantinople on the Dardanelles question, has been held up, and that nothing will be done here until Lord Salisbury obtains further information.

At the same time, having discussed the matter in detail with the Under-Secretary, I gather that he thinks it prejudicial to British interests to demand in Constantinople a free passage for British ships on the grounds of the permission alleged to be extended to the Russians. In his opinion, in order to make that permission effective, the British Government would be forced to keep a number of ships permanently in the Sea of Marmora. Supposing in course of time the Sultan was obliged to yield to Russian pressure, and the Dardanelles were occupied by the Russians, if those British ships were not fully equal in strength to the combined Russian and Turkish forces, they would run a serious risk of being cut off and overwhelmed.

England could not run such a risk, and if she chose this course, must keep a fairly strong fleet stationed on the other side of the Dardanelles. This would cause to the British taxpayers an immense and very unwelcome increase of expense,

and it would be taken as a provocation in Russia and might lead to complications.

Sir Philip added that he assumed that the Porte would in fact consent to let fully armed British ships pass through. But what was much more likely was that, without refusing the British demand absolutely, the Sultan would protest that he had let through only lightly armed or unarmed Russian ships, and that therefore he could grant no wider concessions to England. Thus nothing would be gained, for the British Government cannot, like Russia, arm its ships in all comfort in its own ports after the passage. England would in this case gain no material advantage, but rather a disadvantage, for the Russian Government would certainly try to twist the British demand into a recognition of the principle that the Sultan was bound by treaty to let unarmed ships freely through the Straits.

These remarks of the Under-Secretary leave me in little doubt that if Lord Salisbury, on the subject being reopened by Sir William White, returns to the question, he, Currie, will put this point to the Prime Minister, in favour of a British protest to the Porte, based on the Treaties. Sir Philip Currie imagines that this will at least so far frighten the Sultan as to make him treat any further Russian proposals regarding the passage with greater reserve.

If Lord Salisbury finally decides on this course, the main question will be to which Powers he is to turn with the request to support the British point of view in Constantinople. In our confidential conversations he had not failed to recognise the difficulty of our position regarding the Straits question and the necessity placed on us of greater reserve by the consideration of maintaining peace. It will thus be a question whether he keeps to this policy or thinks it advisable to join us in ours and in the attitude which we intend to adopt. For this eventuality I feel justified in asking to be provided with suitable instructions.

IX. 49–50

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *August 31st*, 1890

Very confidential.

Your report of August 19th seems to indicate that the British Cabinet wishes to revert to the plan of protesting against the Sultan's permission for Russian war-ships to pass through the Dardanelles.

I consider this action objectionable for various reasons.

First I think it doubtful whether Italy and Austria will be inclined to take part in a step in Constantinople, which because neither of them have any real or direct interest, will assume

the character of hostile action against Russia and so aggravate the already insecure position in the East.

This would apply even more to us, who have no interests of our own in the Straits and have often said so. If the Imperial Government desired to take up a position directly against Russia in the Anglo-Russian dispute in the East, German public opinion would rightly see in it a departure from the consistent principles which have hitherto guided German foreign policy in the maintenance of peace, and all the more so, since we could not plead that by so doing we should be serving the interests of our closest allies. If such active intervention by Germany in the East produced complications, we should certainly expect to find our own public opinion against us. Careful observation of feeling and opinion in the Empire is necessary, especially at the present moment when the excitement over the retirement of Prince Bismarck is still spreading and is aggravated by influential sections of the Press.

We have always understood it when, on account of British public opinion, Lord Salisbury has shown a greater reserve regarding our wishes than, according to his own conviction, he deemed necessary. I am, therefore, quite convinced that you will find the Minister perfectly amenable to the explanations given above. A British Minister, at any rate, will easily understand that the constant support we have shown Great Britain hitherto on many points—in Egypt, Africa, in the dispute with Portugal—is difficult to justify before our country.

German Note.

The reference is to the action of the Portuguese Major Serpa Pinto against the Makokolos in December, 1889, which led to a dispute between England and Portugal. The Portuguese were forced to submit to an ultimatum by Great Britain.

We firmly desire it, and should be showing a further proof of it, if in the course of supporting England in matters, which are far removed from our own interests, we compromise our friendly relations towards our powerful Russian neighbour.

To continue :—The question whether the Sultan was justified or not in letting Russian ships through is, to say the least, doubtful, under the existing treaties. The interpretation of the treaties in the sense now desired by England, would be made difficult by Lord Salisbury's declaration at the 18th Session of the Berlin Congress,[1] and by the theory set up by England in 1885, to the effect that an outbreak of hostilities between England and Russia would allow the Sultan to let foreign war-ships through the Straits without violation of his neutrality.

[1] P. 13 of the Protocol, No. XVIII.

Supposing that it were admitted that the treaties could be interpreted in the sense of the protest contemplated by England, an authentic interpretation of the treaties in question, those of 1856 and 1871, would be exclusively the affair of the Signatory Powers. With this argument we have continued hitherto to reject in a friendly spirit the wishes of the opposite party that we should commit ourselves to interpret those treaties. Any utterance on the justification of the British interpretation would therefore bring us into conflict with ourselves.

For this reason also we cannot participate in any protest brought forward by Great Britain. . . .

It would be more advantageous for England, if, as was set out in the telegram of August 8th, she would make use against Russia of the precedent set up by the Sultan. This can be effected most easily by ascertaining whether Russian ships did actually pass through, and then at the right moment demanding from the Sultan similar permission for British ships.

This action would not prevent England from at the same time quietly warning the Sultan in his own interest to be more careful in letting through Russian ships. . . .

IX. 52–3

PRINCE HENRY VII OF REUSS, AMBASSADOR IN VIENNA, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *September 4th*, 1890

Extract.

Count Kalnoky expressed agreement with the standpoint adopted by the Imperial Cabinet. The London Cabinet had not opened the matter here, but a few weeks ago Sir William White, journeying through, had spoken of it in a somewhat excited fashion. He, the Minister, had told the British Ambassador then that the interpretation of the Article in question of the Treaty of Berlin was not quite clear to him. In any case he did not feel called upon to give an explanation of it by himself, and must leave it for all the Signatories of this Treaty. . . .

Count Kalnoky considers that he may assume that the British Cabinet, on finding itself unsupported, will abandon the idea of a protest in Constantinople. . . .

CHAPTER II

THE ZANZIBAR AND HELIGOLAND TREATY

[The good understanding which existed between the two Governments during Bismarck's last years [1] makes it natural that colonial questions which might arise should be settled by mutual agreement. At this time the most important outstanding matters were the delimitation of the respective spheres of influence in East Africa, the disputes between the British and German East African Companies, and the rivalry for influence and control in Zanzibar. In 1887 the native population of the territory acquired by the German East African Company had risen against the Company's authority and compelled most of the agents to fly for safety from the mainland to Zanzibar. The German Government intervened and eventually took over the direct administration of the territory which had hitherto been administered by the German East African Company, founded by Dr. Peters. Considerable fighting took place before German authority was restored and a British squadron combined with the Germans in blockading the coast in order to prevent the introduction of arms and munitions.[2]

There was, however, a serious difference with regard to the territory of Witu, a protectorate over which had been acquired by German representatives, and in 1889 Dr. Peters, the most active of German colonial enthusiasts, was busy concluding treaties with native Chiefs which, had they been recognised, would seriously have circumscribed British influence in the interior. Under these circumstances negotiations were begun between the two Governments, and Lord Salisbury proposed arbitration with regard both to Witu and other territories in dispute. At this stage Bismarck resigned; negotiations which had been begun were however vigorously carried on by his successor, and in July, 1890, resulted in the important agreement by which Germany resigned her protectorate over Witu, recognised the British protectorate over Zanzibar, while in return she received the Island of Heligoland, the acquisition of which, as will be remembered, had been the subject of conversations between England and Germany years before.]

VIII. 3

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO PRINCE BISMARCK,
December 7th, 1889

My observations since my return to London convince me that in colonial questions where German interests are involved,

[1] See Vol. I, p. 357 et seq.

[2] Cf. Official *Précis* of Information concerning the British East Africa Protectorate and Zanzibar, 1901; and Major F. B. Pierce, C.M.G., *Zanzibar*, pp. 138–9; also Sir S. Lee, *King Edward VII*, I, 662.

some dissatisfaction has crept in, not only in certain business circles here, but among the general public, which hampers the solution of such questions.

This dissatisfaction is caused, according to all that I have been able to hear from various quarters, first of all by the development of affairs in Zanzibar. There is an impression here that Zanzibar, to which, as a British creation, England possesses the sole claim, has been lost owing to the weakness of the Government and that our interference has injured British trade there considerably. There is also a firm impression that England will now come up against German interests everywhere in her rightful efforts at colonisation, and that every understanding between the two Governments respecting the limitations of spheres of influence will always lead to a fresh and undesirable limitation of the requirements for British expansion.

This incorrect notion would in itself not be worthy of any particular attention, were it not that, owing to conditions here, it might react to the prejudice of the Government. In my opinion it largely explains why Lord Salisbury, whose good will towards us is unaltered, has for some time past displayed a certain timidity in dealing with colonial questions which have had to be settled between us, and has tried to postpone their decision, and will only make up his mind case by case.

I beg to remind you that Colonel Euan Smith [1] (Consul-General and Political Agent at Zanzibar) has often given vigorous support in favour of a good understanding between us on all differences regarding Zanzibar. In private conversation with Lord Salisbury I myself have at times declared my personal impression that all colonial questions,—not only in Zanzibar,—could be settled in an hour, if representatives of each Government sat round a table to discuss them, with the honest intention of bringing about a result desirable to both countries and their political relationship. Lord Salisbury never denied to me that this in itself would be quite possible and equally desirable, but he explained with evident anxiety that a settlement bound up with numerous concessions on his part would make an impression here unfavourable to the Government, and that consideration for his position forced him to proceed gradually with the settlement of outstanding questions.

I have made this explanation, in order to show clearly the difficulties that beset Lord Salisbury, and to dispel the impression that his slow and procrastinating method of dealing with colonial questions proceeds from less good will on his part. I should also mention that the suspicions of the classes of Englishmen concerned, reacting as they do on public opinion, are genuinely

[1] Cf. Vol. I, p. 240.

connected with the alleged distribution of arms to the Sultan of Witu. This man is supposed to cherish very hostile intentions towards England, and the gift of arms to him leads to the supposition that the German East African Company intends later to throw him and his resources into the fire against British interests.

Lord Salisbury has several times in private conversation referred to the prohibition of the importation of arms and munitions into Zanzibar, and said that this circumstance has stood seriously in the way of his efforts to induce the British East African Company to make concessions in this territory.

VIII. 4

COUNT HERBERT BISMARCK, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *December 18th*, 1889

I have read your report of the 7th inst. on the position of the British Government with regard to colonial questions with interest, and fully appreciate the difficulties which arise for Lord Salisbury out of the wide claims of interested parties in England, especially when these find support in Parliament and in public opinion, which is misled by Chauvinist newspaper articles. Our position, however, in colonial matters is precisely similar. You will remember the violent attacks made last summer against the Chancellor's foreign policy in Germany by newspapers which were otherwise well-meaning. The charge was that his policy was too compliant towards England in colonial matters. We have never let these journalistic excrescences drive us from our traditional policy of a loyal and friendly understanding with England on the various colonial questions, and do not doubt that Lord Salisbury's personal opinion agrees with this, and that the facts will help him to disprove the charge of having, through the weakness of his administration, caused England to suffer loss of prestige and influence overseas.

The spread of England's colonial enterprise has made greater strides of late years, by Charters to the Niger Company, the British East African and South African Companies, than has been the case during the last decades under any other Liberal or Conservative Government. If, in spite of this, there is dissatisfaction amongst the British public at German colonial aspirations in Africa, which the Government there thinks necessary to take into account in the settlement of individual differences, this is due to that under-estimation of the equality of rights of English and German colonial enterprises in foreign countries which is peculiar to the interested parties in England. Those very events in Witu, which Lord Salisbury and Sir Philip

Currie [1] mentioned to you confidentially, prove that the aspirations of the British East African Company are to be realised at the expense of the earlier rights of the German Witu Company.

The British charge of having supplied arms to the Sultan at Witu is unfounded and untenable. The reports received here from the Imperial Consulate at Zanzibar show that the Sultan, who is under German protection, requires these arms solely for the purpose of repelling the constant attacks of neighbouring Somali tribes, by which the lives and property of German settlers in Witu were threatened. Vice-consul Stiefensand, whose report of October 15th on this subject I enclose for your information, acted no more than correctly in granting permission for the export from Zanzibar of the arms which were intended for protection only. The British inference that this action necessarily leaves the British East African Company also free to import an unlimited amount of powder and arms into its spheres of interest is therefore without a logical basis. As far as we know here, the British Company's territory is not threatened with attacks by marauding tribes. And even if this were the case, it would only be a question of introducing arms for protective purposes, and not of unlimited freedom to import war material and trade in it.

At the close of your report you say rightly that it would have been an easy matter last summer for the British Company to come to terms financially with the German Witu Company. Now the position has so far changed that negotiations for fusion are in hand between the Witu and German East African Companies, with every likelihood of an agreement. Meanwhile, if this subject should be reopened to you, you will please not take up an attitude of rejection, but will let it be seen that a financial arrangement with the Witu Company or its successor will achieve its object quicker than unjustified claims against established rights, or attempts to take forcible measures against the Sultan Fumo Bakari, who is under our protection.

Apart also from the question of Witu, I beg you to speak in a friendly manner to Lord Salisbury on German and British colonial affairs in the general sense of this despatch. You will represent that both Governments have unfortunately to take into account the utterances, frequently unreasonable, of public opinion in each country, but that the mutual trust and intimacy between the Cabinets remains excellent, and will as before doubtless allow us to settle each case satisfactorily, as it arises, thanks to our mutual good will.

[1] Reference to a report written on December 13th, not given here. Also cf. Sir A. Hardinge, *A Diplomatist in the East*, p. 128 et seq.

VIII. 6–7

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO PRINCE BISMARCK,
December 22nd, 1889

Extract.

In the course of my last private conversation with Lord Salisbury, he started the subject of Zanzibar with the remark that it would be desirable to clear up some of the outstanding colonial questions, and especially Zanzibar, by a simultaneous understanding. . . .

In this difficult situation Lord Salisbury saw only one way of obtaining an early settlement, which would attain the object, supposing Your Highness agreed to it, without exposing him and his Government to the risk of attacks, which might be awkward on account of too great compliance with our wishes. He added very confidentially that he himself would not object if on certain questions more attention were paid to our wishes than would be acceptable to many sections in England, assuming that he could find support with some authority, which would take the responsibility from his shoulders.

This could be attained, if Your Highness would consider it acceptable and profitable to go to arbitration on the points in question, the form to be agreed upon later.

I replied to the Minister that I naturally was not in a position to express an opinion whether the proposed way would be acceptable to Your Highness. Under this reservation, my impression was that the question raised by him could only be examined with a hope of practical usefulness, if we were informed on what points Lord Salisbury considered arbitration practicable. From the beginning it seemed to me personally, so far as I could judge, that we could not submit to arbitration certain rights to which the title was undisputed. This would in my humble opinion be the case, if the British thought of calling in question, by this means, the East African coastal protectorate, lately assumed by us, which was known to be most unwelcome to the British East African Company.

Lord Salisbury replied with vigour that he had no thought of raising such questions. In making his very confidential proposal he had meant the clearing up of doubtful points by arbitration and at the same time the prevention of future disputes by definite delimitation and exact drawing of the spheres of interest. He would certainly admit the correctness of my remark that the points in question must be more precisely defined. He will, therefore, first consult his technical advisers, draw up a list of the points in question and communicate them to me in strict confidence.

I have since received a private autograph letter from the Minister, of which I enclose a copy, stating the questions capable of being settled by arbitration. I observe that it is really only a question of Zanzibar, and that other colonial differences between us and England, the settlement of which is perhaps equally desirable in the interests of our friendly relations all round, are not mentioned.

At the close of our last conversation Lord Salisbury remarked that his suggestion raised a complicated and difficult question which did not admit of over-hasty treatment. We should therefore have plenty of time for ripe consideration, and he held himself ready, if his proposal appeared acceptable to us in principle, to discuss the matter again with me in the course of the following month.

German Note.

Germany entered willingly into the idea of arbitration (Despatch of January 19th, 1890), which should include not only the questions raised by Lord Salisbury, but others in addition. It was then suggested that Sir Percy Anderson, of the Colonial Department of the Foreign Office, should go to Berlin to settle and prepare for the arbitration. Sir Percy Anderson left at the beginning of May, 1890.

[On March 20th, 1890, Prince Bismarck resigned.]

VIII. 8–9

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *April 30th*, 1890

With reference to previous conversations, I have informed Lord Salisbury that a short delay is desirable in order to allow Your Excellency and the Foreign Secretary time to master the subject fully. He quite understands this and considers that a discussion should take place between myself and Sir Percy Anderson, to whom he means to speak to-day, before the latter's departure.

Lord Salisbury, speaking generally, said that it would be a difficult task; he meant that it would be easy in Africa to agree about the coast, but that the difficulties lay in the interior, especially in the neighbourhood of the Lakes. For England there were, for instance, certain questions of sentiment, such as the Missions[1] to the West of Lake Nyassa, to be considered.

I replied that there were difficulties on both sides. The Emperor was very eager for the development of our colonies, and the public felt strongly about them. By mutual concession we might hope for a satisfactory outcome, and I believed, for reasons often discussed between us, that the attempt should in any case be made.

[1] Cf. Vol. I, p. 243. Also Sir A. Hardinge, *A Diplomatist in the East*, p. 120.

Sir Percy Anderson visited me yesterday at the Minister's desire. He agreed with me that it was high time to try for an understanding. He considered that, when he last discussed the matter with Dr. Krauel,[1] the future limits of the two spheres of influence should have been amicably settled at that time, if only the swift advance of both parties into still unknown districts could have been foreseen. Now, however, the situation was that on the one side Emin Pacha's expedition, and on the other the Stanley excitement in England, would bring about still greater activity in Africa and perhaps cause new and more serious difficulties between us. These difficulties were chiefly due to the mutual jealousy and suspicion of the British and German Companies in Zanzibar. The British colonial Companies possessed great power and influence here. The Government found itself, therefore, in an awkward position with regard to colonial questions, for the different Companies naturally had varying interests, and none felt bound to make sacrifices for the sake of the others.

Sir Percy Anderson greatly emphasised the difficulties at Zanzibar and the necessity of forestalling future differences by another demarkation of frontiers. He indicated clearly that the fact of Witu being in our hands was the chief stumbling-block and the reason for British mistrust. The right foundation for lasting friendly relations between the two countries would be a delimitation so completely separating the two territories, that the German territory would lie to the South and the British to the North of the frontier line under discussion.

I replied that, as regarded Witu and our Protectorate there, I could only say that, when in Berlin, I observed that we looked on it as a great possession full of future promise, which could scarcely be either relinquished or diminished.

I took occasion, without touching the subject any further, to say that both Companies would certainly be able to develop themselves better, if the English and German titles to the districts handed over by the Sultan were settled by an amicable agreement with him. Sir Percy admitted that in the end this would resolve itself into a question of finance, and he seemed to like the idea on the whole. In my opinion the question will depend on whether Lord Salisbury, in his regard for public opinion here, thinks it advisable to suggest to the Sultan the abdication of his sovereign rights.

Sir Percy Anderson, who evidently expected me to make some definite proposals, seemed very much worried by the question of the basis for the coming negotiations in Berlin. I said to him that the proper course, in my opinion, was for both parties to

[1] Cf. Vol. I, pp. 225–7.

speak out frankly, with the clear understanding that no use should be made by the one party of any concessions suggested in the course of discussion by the other in view of certain combinations, in the event of the negotiations breaking down. He readily agreed to this and evidently seemed delighted to be able under these conditions openly to express his opposition to Dr. Krauel, whose earlier friendly spirit he praises. It seemed to me important to offer Sir Percy, who is somewhat anxious about it, this clear assurance in advance.

I suggested to him the following general principle with regard to Zanzibar, which he did not oppose, to the effect that it was desirable to find an agreement, under which both nations would in future be free to develop and extend at will the territories assigned to them.

The next task will be to settle privately on what principles and how far the British negotiator can agree to our expansion in the direction of the Lakes.

German Note.

The negotiations began in Berlin early in May, 1890. The prospect of a quick understanding between Sir Percy Anderson and Dr. Krauel seemed so favourable, that the question of arbitration sank into the background. As Count Hatzfeldt was informed on May 10th, serious difficulties only cropped up concerning the delimitation of spheres of interests to the West of Lake Nyassa.

VIII. 11

Count Hatzfeldt, in London, to Baron von Marschall, *May 14th*, 1890

Private.

I met Lord Salisbury at Windsor Castle last Monday. He could not speak to me there, but he appointed a meeting for yesterday at the Foreign Office. . . .

I suggested that it might be better for us to put on one side our official character and talk with full confidence simply as Lord Salisbury and Count Hatzfeldt.

This suggestion pleased Lord Salisbury and evidently relieved him. He took it literally and proceeded to ask if I had any proposals to make to him personally. I said no and added that the Berlin Foreign Office merely reported to me the course taken by the negotiations, without further instructions. I was, however, very keen personally to end the whole matter satisfactorily, and this was why I had asked for confidential discussion with him.

We then shortly discussed the differences that had cropped up in Berlin and their essential significance. Lord Salisbury at once mentioned the disputed territory North-west of Lake

Nyassa and observed that the Hinterland theory, which had been invented by us and was not recognised here, had not been accepted in International Law. Moreover, it could not possibly apply to territory which had been discovered by Englishmen, and where British interests had existed long before our time. This was the case in those very tracts in question, where the well-known English Missions had their settlements. He had told me continually for several years that for serious reasons he could not let them go. There was also the British-built road [1] from the North end of Lake Nyassa to the South of Lake Tanganyika, for the cession of which he would be greatly blamed here.

I replied that I personally could leave on one side for the present the Hinterland theory. The question, as I saw it, was that a compromise on colonial questions was very necessary for various reasons in the interests of both sides, in order to prevent further friction and also to allow both parties to expand at will in the spheres assigned to them. The only possible basis for this, by whatever name it was called, was to start from the coast, following the frontier lines already recognised by both parties into the interior, and to define them as fairly as possible in the interests of both parties. If there was refusal to adopt this method and so settle the questions depending on it, the need of both for expansion, which did not allow of restriction, would lead to unpleasant surprises, as had been shown by the British in Uganda. I considered that on our side we could not tolerate such occurrences. A deadlock would arise, if everyone acted independently and, in every case of the sort, opposed or protested against the right of the other to add to his possessions.

As regards the North-West coast of Lake Nyassa, he, Lord Salisbury, might have some difficulties to face on the subject of the Missions, although these would be well provided for under our protection. The proposed arrangement, however, was not a matter of a single detail, but of a comprehensive scheme, and I thought it quite possible that the understanding, when arrived at, would be of advantage to British interests in other directions and would compensate them for the loss or removal of those settlements. At the same time I indicated that we also could not renounce the whole of the territory under dispute, and that at least a partition of the object of contention would be advisable.

After some hesitation Lord Salisbury decided to consider our differences in East Africa as a whole and to formulate the sum of his wishes, and added with emphasis that this was to lie under the conditions of our confidential discussion together.

[1] The Stephenson Road.

I summarise these wishes, which extend further than I expected, as follows:

1. As regards the often mentioned territory North-West of Lake Nyassa, he would, if we were in agreement about the rest, consent to a partition. (How much of the land there would fall to us has not yet been closely discussed.)

2. We should obtain also a part of the disputed territory to the South-West of Victoria Nyanza, the accepted frontier being a line stretching from the North end of Lake Tanganyika (and said to be a range of hills) at about the North-East corner of the disputed square up to Lake Victoria Nyanza.

3. In return for these concessions Germany would renounce in England's favour Witu, Manda and Patta and a protectorate over the neighbouring districts.

In connection with these three points Lord Salisbury expressed the following very significant and hitherto unknown desire:

4. England should be permitted to assume a protectorate over the Island of Zanzibar; in return for which

5. The British Parliament should pass an Act, handing the Island of Heligoland over to Germany.

6. In the event of agreement the British Government was prepared to admit that our territories on the mainland coast of Zanzibar, which had been granted to use by the Sultan for administration, should remain definitely in our possession.

I should mention here all that the Minister said otherwise confirms the supposition already expressed by me in Berlin that they will be reluctant here to give up any sort of connection between British interests in the South and the Northern Lakes. . . .

Finally Lord Salisbury begged me to report to Berlin nothing of what he had said; he must first see the Directors of the British Companies, after which he would speak to me again. I agreed to this, so I earnestly beg that this despatch may be kept absolutely secret, until I report on my next conversation with the Minister. This will probably be in a few days.

As I expected, I found Lord Salisbury under the impression that Stanley's rousing speeches will make his position in regard to colonial questions considerably more difficult, and that he is bound to be very careful. Your Excellency will have seen from the articles I have sent, in particular those in the Conservative *St. James's Gazette*, that Stanley's activities here have succeeded in fanning the colonial Chauvinism into a flame and in misleading public opinion about the justice of our claims in East Africa. The Minister frankly admitted that Stanley concluded treaties in the Interior, which the British Government, in consideration for public opinion, had not been able completely to ignore.

VIII. 14

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *May 17th*, 1890

Telegram.

According to Lord Salisbury's proposals for further delimitation of our spheres of influence in East Africa, England would be driving a wedge as far as the North end of Lake Tanganyika and between its Southern end and Lake Nyassa, i.e. between the German territory and the Congo State so that our boundary would nowhere touch that of the Congo State. That England should so surround our sphere of interest from the back is contrary to Lord Salisbury's Note to Sir Edward Malet, of July 2nd, 1887, and cannot be accepted by us. We must demand that our boundary at the North end of Tanganyika shall lie along 1° S., and in the South on a line reaching from Rovuma across Lake Nyassa up to the Congo State boundary. Whether this line will be drawn on the West or North-West side of Lake Nyassa we will leave for further discussion. We shall not insist in principle on this point in the question of the partition of the territory to the West of Lake Nyassa.

Only if assured of England's readiness to meet our wishes, as shown above, could we consider the cession of Witu, Manda and Patta and the Somali Coast. We are prepared to promise complete freedom for British trade, working from the North by way of the Lakes to the Zambezi.

We are ready to renounce possession of Lake Ngami (Bechuanaland) if we receive the compensation in Togoland, which has been suggested by Sir Percy Anderson.

As regards Lord Salisbury's more extensive proposals, do not *a priori* adopt an attitude of refusal, but I leave you to say to Lord Salisbury, as your personal opinion, that if an understanding on the disputed questions is reached, we shall probably be inclined to discuss the newly raised questions.

VIII. 15

COUNT HATZFELDT, TO LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *May 22nd*, 1890

Cipher telegram.

Discussed again in strict confidence with Lord Salisbury the points under dispute in East Africa. The situation is much complicated by Stanley's hostile and inflammatory attacks, and Lord Salisbury is inclined to consider that it will be advisable to postpone our negotiations until the excitement is allayed. I was finally able to wring from him a few small concessions regarding the square piece to the West of Lake Nyassa. It is

not disputed that our territory extends to the East coast of Lake Tanganyika. He made yet another concession in the disputed square piece West of Victoria Nyanza, by which our territory to the North of Lake Tanganyika would touch the Congo State boundary for some distance. I think that on this point, after further friendly negotiation, even more may be obtained.

My report follows to-morrow.

VIII. 16

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *May 23rd*, 1890

Telegram. Secret.

Postponement of negotiations most undesirable on account of the impression on public opinion and of the risk of further differences owing to expeditions into the interior of East Africa. For your information and for use in strict confidence with Lord Salisbury I inform you that we are ready, in return for the concession and probable further ones mentioned in your telegram, to hand over to England Witu and the Somali Coast, with their respective Hinterlands, and to concede a British Protectorate over Zanzibar, if England will hand over Heligoland, and support us in demanding from the Sultan of Zanzibar the cession of the coast of the mainland, which he has hitherto granted to the German East African Company for administration. As regards Witu, we shall naturally be obliged to make our terms with the German East African Company, before finally deciding.

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *May 25th*, 1890

Telegram. Secret.

The possession of Heligoland is highly important to us for military reasons because of the Kiel Canal, and the possession of the coastal strip leased to us by the Sultan is indispensable for the definite regulation of our position in East Africa. The disputed district at the North end of Lake Tanganyika is the most important part of the boundary of our sphere of influence. Next in order comes the part South of Tanganyika and North-West of Lake Nyassa. We attach no value to Lake Ngami, and we can eventually cede Witu.

On these general principles we would, if England cedes Heligoland and promises to support us in acquiring the coastal strip administered by the German East African Company, go so far in our concessions as to :—

1. Accept the Northern line, extending Eastwards from Lake Alexandra [Akenyara] along the River Kagera up to Lake Victoria-Nyanza, and westward up to the Congo State. We

accept Lord Salisbury's proposal for the Southern partition. If England will grant us the straight line from the mouth of the Kagera to the Congo State, we are ready to give up entirely the disputed part in the South.

2. To cede Witu, Manda, Patta, and the Somali Coast, with their Hinterlands, to England;

3. To acknowledge England's Protectorate over Zanzibar;

4. To give up Lake Ngami to England, as proposed by Sir Percy Anderson.

We are ready for an immediate agreement on this basis. It is assumed that England acknowledges Anderson's offer of the concession regarding the frontiers of Togoland, whilst we renounce all other disputed requirements.

Failing the concession by England of Heligoland and the coastal strip, we should have to insist on the straight line in the North from the mouth of the Kagera to the Congo State and on the partitioning of the disputed territory in the South, and we could only discuss relinquishing Witu, etc., if we were granted much greater concessions in the South, than those that are offered.

Please inform Lord Salisbury, without showing too much eagerness, that a long delay will only injure for good and all the chances of an agreement. You can also make confidential use of what you know of German sentiment.

German Note.

A telegram from Count Hatzfeldt of May 28th announced a further concession by Lord Salisbury. The latter, however, before making a binding statement, desired to secure the agreement of those immediately interested (i.e. Mackinnon in the North and the Scottish Missionaries in the South).

VIII. 17–18

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *May 29th*, 1890

Telegram. Secret.

You will note, as I mentioned in my telegram of May 25th, that the possession of Heligoland is of supreme importance to us and is by far the most serious matter in the whole negotiation. His Majesty shares the Chancellor's opinion that without Heligoland the Kiel Canal is useless to our Navy. We shall, therefore, always regard the acquisition of Heligoland as a gain in itself even as against the concessions mentioned in my telegram, or any other similar ones in the colonies.

You may point out to Lord Salisbury that you are convinced that so good an opportunity will scarcely occur twice for settling two questions so threatening to Anglo-German relations—East

Africa and Heligoland—in a way which will give so little cause of complaint to the Jingos either in England or in Germany. No German Government can put off for ever public discussion of the question, why England attaches such disproportionate value to the possession of this islet, which has no importance in peace-time, but which makes the coast defence of Germany difficult, and facilitates hostile observation and attack.

German sense of fairness will appreciate the suggestion that no one can be called upon to give up a possession for nothing. Since up till now we have had nothing tangible to offer to England, it was easy to restrict discussion of the Heligoland question by the Press and the public within the narrow limits of casual mention. But now that we are ready to exchange certain territorial claims for Heligoland,—claims, the mere raising of which appears serious enough to excite public opinion throughout England, the affair bears quite a different aspect. If at this point the exchange were refused by England, Germany would realise that no price would induce England to give up a possession, which is only important as a means of injuring Germany in the event of war.

The foregoing is intended to define more clearly than in the telegram the point of view of His Imperial Majesty's Government, which is that the subject of Heligoland having been introduced by Lord Salisbury, this at once becomes our chief consideration, by the side of which our East African interests merely come forward as matters for concession. . . .

To avoid any possible misconception, I observe once more that by the concession offered by Anderson in regard to Togoland, the Volta is indicated as the frontier line. I refer you to Dr. Krauel's Minute No. 5.

VIII. 19

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *May 30th*, 1890

Telegram. Secret.

I never forget the importance of Heligoland, but I should not recommend indicating its true importance too soon to Lord Salisbury, who *so far* regards Heligoland as in reality of no value *to us*. There would then be *no* further concession to be obtained in the colonies, and we should be obliged to grant *all* colonial demands, in order to gain the island.

At our last meeting, I for this reason did not begin about Heligoland, but I left it for Lord Salisbury. At the end he said that he now wished to discuss it with his colleagues, some of whom were *nervous* on the point on account of Parliament

and public opinion. He did *not* share this view. I encouraged him in this and added that I hoped to secure for him the protectorate over Zanzibar in return.

The real and chief obstacle in the present negotiation consists in the conflicting interests of the British companies in the North and South of our territory. (To-day's *Times* contains an instructive leading article on the subject.) Mackinnon in the North may be able to concede something to us in return for the cession of Witu, without disadvantage. But, if the South African Company insists on a free passage to the North, we have so far no compensation to offer in return for our demand for a common frontier with the Congo State.

Lord Salisbury has just written to me from Hatfield that the companies interested are not yet in agreement together and that he wishes to see me here on Tuesday after the Cabinet meeting. I shall try to speak to him before that, and then, if necessary for success, I shall in the last resort give way entirely over the disputed territory in the South. But it is necessary for me to know what, if anything, is the utmost that I may concede in the North also. I shall not yield in any direction, more than is absolutely necessary for success.

VIII. 20

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *May 31st*, 1890

Telegram. Secret.

I am ordered by His Majesty, who is in full agreement with your tactics regarding Heligoland, to request you to accept as a guide, in your further negotiations with Lord Salisbury, the following :—

If we altogether renounce the disputed territory in the South, and accept as our frontier a straight line drawn from the South end of Lake Tanganyika to the North end of Lake Nyassa, we must insist that our northern frontier shall be a straight line drawn from the mouth of the Kagera westward to the Congo State. If, in spite of our renunciation in the South, this is not obtainable, and especially if England insists on the line Kagera-mouth—Lake Alexandra—Congo State, and if the conclusion of the agreement depends exclusively on this question, you will please ask for further instructions by telegraph.

I repeat that we can only give up the southern territory as well as Witu, etc., on the assumption that the retirement from Heligoland and the acquisition of the coastal district form part of the agreement, as mentioned in my telegram of May 25th. Without this assumption we could not consider the surrender

of Witu, etc., unless the frontier in the North, already mentioned, and also a considerable part of the territory under dispute in the South, is given up.

If Lord Salisbury refers again to a postponement of the negotiations, please remind him that Dr. Peters will arrive on the coast by the end of June, and that, taking into consideration his character and antecedents, it is certainly to be expected that in pushing the treaties concluded by him, he will arouse our public opinion against England, just as Stanley has done in England against Germany.

VIII. 21

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO THE EMPEROR, *June 4th*, 1890

Cipher telegram.

At yesterday's conference between Count Hatzfeldt and Lord Salisbury the latter declared that he had found much anxiety amongst his colleagues concerning these concessions (The EMPEROR: *'!'*) and suggested that it would be better to postpone further this and the connected question of the protectorate over Zanzibar (The EMPEROR: *'No! All or nothing!'*) and leave it for a later agreement. (The EMPEROR: *'No!'*) Count Hatzfeldt replied that the concessions already mentioned could only be granted on this side, if all points were settled together and formed a satisfactory whole in every direction. (The EMPEROR: *'Correct!'*)

The next conference is at 5 o'clock to-morrow.

VIII. 21–2

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *June 4th*, 1890

Telegram. Secret.

I fully agree with your declaration to Lord Salisbury that the concessions so far mentioned by us can only be maintained, if an all-round, satisfactory settlement of all the outstanding questions together is arrived at. We can only justify such great concessions before public opinion, if by an agreement all the principal points under dispute between ourselves and England are removed for a considerable time ahead, and it is made possible for us to develop our East African colonies unmolested by the pretensions of England. Until the questions of the coastal district, the Zanzibar Protectorate and the ownership of Manda and Patta are settled, there is no inducement for us to give up large areas of our Hinterland, to which we have at least as good a claim as England. This applies especially to the disputed territory in the South.

On this account we can only give up this southern territory—

including the Stephenson Road—if 1° South latitude from Lake Victoria Nyanza to the Congo State is granted to us as a frontier in the North.

We can concede mutual freedom of trade, settlement and religion, as proposed by Lord Salisbury.

A combination, leaving us Witu, but reserving the ownership of Manda and Patta for arbitration, is of no use to us.

When you make use of the appropriate parts of my telegram of May 29th, you will indicate especially to Lord Salisbury that the main success of such an agreement will consist in the assurance to both parties that unsettled colonial differences will not give rise to disagreements, likely in incalculable ways to disturb the continuity of European policy.

From this general standpoint the undecided questions in East Africa, and those of Zanzibar and Heligoland together, form for us an inseparable whole.

VIII. 22–3

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *June 5th*, 1890

Cipher telegram. Secret.

As after a discussion of several hours to-day no definite result was arrived at, finally at my suggestion a scheme giving all the points was drawn up on the understanding that Lord Salisbury, after further discussion with his colleagues, is to communicate to me next Saturday the British Government's final decision on this scheme, whilst I likewise have reserved until then the agreement of my Government.

According to this project we shall receive in the North 1° South latitude, and in the South a line drawn from the mouth of the Rukura on Lake Nyassa to the mouth of the Kilambo at the South of Lake Tanganyika. The British Government will help us with the Sultan in securing the suzerainty, and Lord Salisbury stipulates that the Sultan shall be granted an indemnity for the Customs Revenue which was guaranteed to him. I ask for special instructions on this point.

Freedom of trade, settlement and religion, as demanded by Lord Salisbury, is granted by us.

We renounce Lake Ngami under the terms of the frontier proposed by Sir Percy Anderson.

In Togoland we receive the Volta as frontier line, and Inconia.

We give up Witu and the Protectorate over it; also Patta and Manda.

England receives the Protectorate over Zanzibar and Pemba.

Heligoland is handed over to Germany. / In connection with

this Lord Salisbury demands a declaration, whereby the introduction of conscription is to be delayed for a period to be determined later . . .[1] and the right of option granted to the inhabitants.

In the event of a definite and binding understanding on Saturday, Sir Percy Anderson shall come to Berlin to complete the remaining details and conclude the negotiations.

VIII. 23–4

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *June 6th*, 1890

Telegram. Secret.

I am ordered by His Majesty to declare the German Government's agreement with the scheme described in your telegram of June 5th. I add the following remarks :—

1. Lord Salisbury's suggestion that, when sovereignty over the coastal strip administered by the German East Africa Company has been handed over to us, an indemnity for the Customs Revenue, which was guaranteed to the Sultan of Zanzibar, shall be granted to him, is agreed to.

2. We concede undisturbed transit, duty free, for Englishmen and English goods between Lake Tanganyika and our northern frontier West of Victoria Nyanza, in return for similar favours for us between Nyassa and Tanganyika and between Nyassa and the Congo State boundary, also mutual freedom for religion and education ; also settlement and trading rights.

3. The right of the inhabitants of Heligoland to an option is admitted by us, and no objection in principle is raised against a more exact agreement being arrived at regarding the date for introducing universal service there.

His Majesty regards this scheme as a whole as the utmost that we can concede. He has stated with decision that if England fails to accept it, as presented by you to Lord Salisbury, further negotiations must be renounced, and thereafter nothing but effective possession of the disputed territory can decide the question.

VIII. 24

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *June 11th*, 1890

Secret.

The wearisome negotiations on the colonial question, greatly aggravated as they have been by Stanley's series of speeches and the aggressive articles in the Press here, are so far concluded,

[1] Cipher group missing.

in that the Cabinet has declared, with certain reservations, its adherence to the agreement arrived at privately between the Prime Minister and myself. This fact is of importance, for Lord Salisbury repeatedly and confidentially informed me yesterday that certain Ministers had opposed him to the end, partly from anxiety for its possible reactions on the Cabinet's position, and partly because, odd as it may appear, they felt bound to set a real value on the possession of Heligoland. These members of the Cabinet said openly that the possibility of war with Germany was not removed for all time and that in such an event Heligoland would undoubtedly serve as a valuable base for the British fleet.

In my humble opinion the only serious objection that a British Minister, anxious about politics, might find against giving up Heligoland, namely the fear that the transfer of this island to Germany might substantially increase the French dislike of England, does not seem to be recognised, or at least was never mentioned. Nor has the British Cabinet realised the value of Heligoland to us in connection with the Kiel Canal, and I naturally have carefully avoided letting it be realised. On the other hand, Lord Salisbury often used the argument that if a Franco-German war broke out, Heligoland would form a base for France very inconvenient to us. I replied at once that it was clearly to the interest of England to prevent such an eventuality, which would permanently alienate from England all German sympathies, and probably develop into a serious difference between us. I owe it to Lord Salisbury to add that he accepted this view at once and readily recognised his country's interest in preventing the eventuality in question.

[The Agreement was eventually signed on July 1st, 1890.]

CHAPTER III

THE FRENCH OPPOSITION TO THE HELIGOLAND TREATY

TUNIS AND MADAGASCAR, 1890

VIII. 26

COUNT MÜNSTER, AMBASSADOR IN PARIS, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *June 19th*, 1890

The publication of the Anglo-German Treaty regarding the East African colonies and particularly the cession of Heligoland to Germany has roused general surprise and resentment here.

Many of the politicians here reckoned on an understanding with England and on the friction existing between British and Germans in East Africa, which really threatened to drive these nations apart.

Our understanding on this subject was bound to be most distasteful to the French, who are especially excited over the cession of Heligoland, since they imagine that England would never have permitted it, if we had not entered into engagements particularly on the subject of Egypt.

Yesterday M. Ribot [1] could scarcely contain his anger, when I saw him at the Wednesday reception, and said that it was a great diplomatic success, obtained with very little sacrifice on our part.

With Lord Lytton [2] he was more frank and told him openly that he was sure there were secret clauses.

My English colleague, ever a great friend of Germany and an enemy of Russia, is extraordinarily pleased at this conclusion of our negotiations and much hopes that Parliament will not make difficulties.

I hope and believe the same, for Mr. Gladstone, whom I saw in England a short while ago, and who seems to have been informed by Lord Salisbury of his intentions, promised me to raise no difficulties with regard to the negotiations with us.

I cannot express my joy at the acquisition of Heligoland. I

[1] French Foreign Minister.

[2] British Ambassador.

have always openly advocated its extreme importance to us, and have often quietly tried to prepare the way for its cession, but I could never induce Prince Bismarck to make a move in the matter; he attached no importance to it.

The French Press does not know yet how to treat the matter, but speaks with great bitterness, and I think that this will increase.

The excited state of public feeling will soon die down again, and the advantage that we have gained is greater than any damage that can be done by this momentary disagreement.

German Note.

Before the final conclusion of the Agreement of July 1st, 1890, the French Government had made it clear in London that, in consideration of the agreement of 1862 between France and England that the Sultan of Zanzibar should be independent, France expected compensation. It was gravely feared in Italy that France would seek this in Tunis, possibly in the form of a renunciation by England of all her rights in Tunis under the former Capitulations, and thus clear the way for complete annexation by France. The Italian Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin visited the Secretary of State, Baron von Marschall, on June 26th, and the latter directed Hatzfeldt forthwith to use his influence 'so that, in case England thought it necessary to offer compensation to France, this should be sought not in Tunis, but in Madagascar.'[1]

VIII. 27

Count Münster, in Paris, to the Chancellor, Caprivi, *July 12th*, 1890

The irritation against England goes on increasing, whereas the general feeling towards us is decidedly better.

The Zanzibar negotiations[2] drag on and are becoming more difficult, because the Radicals are waging underground warfare against MM. Ribot and Waddington, and hope to use this opportunity for bringing about their fall.

There are three questions which M. Ribot would like to treat as one, but which Lord Salisbury is determined to keep separate,—Egypt, Zanzibar and the Newfoundland Fisheries.

In his negotiations about the recognition of the protectorate over Zanzibar, Lord Salisbury clings firmly to the view that France's sanction is not required, and indicates that in the matter of Tunis France has always favoured the principle that a protectorate does not prejudice the sovereignty of the State.

He also gives the assurance that he does not wish the assumption of the Zanzibar protectorate to disturb good relations, and that he will willingly concede any desires that France may put forward on this occasion.

At first these desires were centred on the settlement of certain

[1] Cf. Ch. IX, Telegram of June 26, 1890. [2] See note above.

differences in Madagascar and a frontier rectification on the Niger in West Africa.

Tunis was mentioned only casually. At the first whisper of this, M. Ribot found both Lord Lytton and Lord Salisbury so unwilling to enter into this question, that he dropped it completely.

But he has lately returned to it and has said straight out to Lord Lytton that his position is seriously threatened by the Tunis question.

The Radicals, led by Floquet, Lacroix and Clemenceau, demand that the Government shall now, without troubling about Italy, challenge England, and openly declare the annexation of Tunis. I doubt whether they will push this through and whether the present Cabinet, which is pretty strong on the whole, will be drawn into it, and so far this intrigue has not risen to the surface even in the Press.

The speech in the Chamber of Deputies, in which the Minister, usually so cautious, went very far in hinting at the possibility of annexation, was a sheet-anchor thrown out by himself for his own safety. For this reason he would fain win a success, if a not very important one, and also once more drag Tunis into the negotiations.

He demands little now, merely a few changes in the British Commercial Treaty with Tunis. Lord Lytton opposes this on political grounds on account of Italy and opines that one must not expect gratitude from French politicians.

VIII. 29

MEMORANDUM BY HOLSTEIN, GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 18th*, 1890

The French Ambassador handed me to-day the attached Note from his Government. It makes reservations with reference to the Anglo-German Agreement on the grounds of the German declaration of March 10th, 1886, by which we promised, in accordance with the Anglo-German declaration of 1862, to respect the independence of the Sultan of Zanzibar.

The Ambassador added that anything could be paid for by compensation.

I replied yes, some unobjectionable and some objectionable. Moreover the French had declared, with reference to the occupation of Tunis, that a protectorate did not imply a change of ownership.

The Ambassador answered that nevertheless externally a protectorate did make a certain difference. M. Herbette then turned to Tunis and said that he had seen the beginnings of it when Private Secretary to M. Waddington in 1878. Prince

Bismarck had then offered Tunis to the latter—and apparently at the same time to the Italians.[1] Herbette said to Waddington at the time: 'If you want to take Tunis, take it now at once, dating your declaration from Berlin.'

I remarked that to refer back to those events was much the same as if one wished to return to a young lady whom one could have married years before, and who had got married in the meantime. . . .

THE FRENCH NOTE

Enclosure.

VIII. 28–9

THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR, HERBETTE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *le* 18 *Juillet*, 1890

Dans son No. du 10 de ce mois le *Reichsanzeiger* a publié le texte définitif d'un arrangement conclu entre l'Allemagne et l'Angleterre et dont l'Article 11 tend à la reconnaissance de la cession éventuelle à l'Empire Allemand par le Sultan de Zanzibar de i'île Mafia et de territoires de terre ferme dépendant du Sultanat de Zanzibar.

Le Gouvernement de la République Française croit devoir faire toutes réserves quant à la réalisation de ce projet avant que, d'un commun accord, l'Allemagne ne soit délié vis-à-vis de lui, de l'engagement qu'elle a pris, par son adhésion du 27 novembre, 1886, à la déclaration anglo-française du 10 Mars, 1862, de respecter l'indépendance du Sultan de Zanzibar.

L'Ambassadeur de France soussigné est, d'ailleurs, autorisé à entrer en échange de vues avec la Chancellerie Impériale pour le règlement de cette question.

German Notes.

According to Article 11, the Sultan of Zanzibar was to be influenced by England to renounce his possessions on the mainland near Mafia in favour of Germany in return for a small indemnity, and Germany engaged to recognise the British protectorate over Zanzibar.[2]

The 'adhésion' of November 27 was in accordance with Article 7 of the Anglo-German Agreement of November 1st, 1886: 'Germany engages to support the declaration signed on March 10th, 1862, by Great Britain and France in respect of the recognition of the Sultan of Zanzibar's independence.'

VIII. 30

MEMORANDUM BY KAYSER, OF THE COLONIAL SECTION OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 18th*, 1890

The protest proves that the Anglo-French negotiations are are not going well.

[1] Cf. Vol. I, pp. 81, 94, 126.
[2] Cf. *Staatsarchiv*, Vol. LI, p. 156.

It would in itself seem advisable to join hands with England and inform the British Government of this protest. But England seems to wish to fight the question out alone with France; otherwise by now she would have decided to call for our support. For us to take the initiative in London would give an impression of anxiety and tend to postpone the debate on the Agreement in the House of Commons until an understanding had been reached with France.

I, therefore, should vote for informing Count Hatzfeldt in confidence of the protest, and also for leaving it unanswered for the present.

HOLSTEIN, GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *July 18th*, 1890

Herewith I forward you the Note handed to me to-day by the French Ambassador.

The Chancellor considers that in this question our position with regard to France does not accord with England's. Germany's intention is to acquire a part of the Sultan of Zanzibar's territory with his consent. No one can see in this an infraction of the Treaty of 1862.

Hence we are not bound to come to a common agreement with the British Government in respect of our relations towards France. But if you think it advisable and useful to inform that Government of the protest, I leave any further action to your discretion. We do not intend to take any action on the French protest for the present, but first to give renewed expression to the views described above.

VIII. 31

THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, TO COUNT MÜNSTER, IN PARIS, *July 23rd*, 1890

Extract.

From the legal point of view there is no doubt that the Treaty of Guarantee of March 10th, 1862, between England and France, to which Germany adhered in 1886, merely implies the independence of the Sultan of Zanzibar and that his rights of possession may not be seized against his will. . . .

VIII. 33

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *July 22nd*, 1890

. . . To-day, Lord Salisbury referred to his negotiations with M. Waddington and told me, this time in strict confidence, that it would be difficult to bring these to a conclusion, particu-

larly with regard to the point affecting the British Commercial Treaty with Tunis, on which there was no possibility of agreement. I remarked that I thought this desirable, in consideration of the Italian sensitiveness on all that concerned Tunis, and also I could not see what injury England would suffer, even if this negotiation never actually came to a conclusion, since our Agreement had given its object, namely the Sultan and his territory, into her hands. Lord Salisbury agreed with me, and said with a smile, that, as he had often told me, he was in no hurry for the proclamation of the British Protectorate and could carry on with the present conditions in Zanzibar without disadvantage for some time longer.

I will mention a remark of the Prime Minister's made during this conversation. It was that France's policy was a stupid one, as all that she did tended to drive England completely into the arms of Germany.

German Note.

Count Hatzfeldt was instructed by telegram on July 23rd, 1890: 'See to it that the British associate themselves with us in the Zanzibar Indemnity question. I think Malet wrote yesterday to Salisbury in this sense. If they wish to push us out we shall push also.'

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 24th*, 1890

Telegram. Secret.

Lord Salisbury's attitude is shown by the value he attaches, both on material and parliamentary grounds, to a satisfactory agreement with France on the question of Zanzibar and still more on that of Newfoundland; also by his fear of being involved in complications caused by excessive pressure on our part, for which he would be made responsible here.

Hence also his wish to gain time, which I have often reported. Once Parliament has approved Heligoland, the excessive demands of France regarding Zanzibar will prevent an understanding with her, and it would be much easier to gain England's participation in diplomatic action, if we proceed gently, and if I can convince Lord Salisbury that a war-like development is not intended, and should not be brought about by over-violent language.

VIII. 34

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 24th*, 1890

Cipher telegram.

Secret.

Lord Salisbury considers it essential to avoid anything likely

to appear as a provocation to France, or place in the hands of the Francophil Opposition weapons against himself and against our Agreement, before the Heligoland Bill has been definitely accepted. Until lately also he feared that if he joined with us in dealing with the French protest, he might be led into taking part in angry discussions in Paris, which might be construed here as provocation of a neighbouring Power.

I assured him that, if he was willing to join us in dealing with the protest, we should be ready to grant him the required delay, at any rate until after the settlement of the Heligoland Bill, and I further reassured him by saying that we neither wished for a conflict with France, nor would propose his joining us in declarations which here or in Paris could be construed as a provocation. On this I was empowered by Lord Salisbury to report to Your Excellency that under these circumstances he would be prepared to deal with the French protest jointly with us after the Heligoland Bill was passed.

Until that moment our to-day's understanding on this point must naturally be kept secret.

Lord Salisbury empowered me also to report that, as far as his knowledge went, no word had been spoken so far in the negotiations with the French Ambassador, which could affect our interests in Africa.

It would be well, if I were authorised by telegraph, to inform Lord Salisbury that Your Excellency approves the assurance given by me to him, and with regard to Lord Salisbury's, that you are well pleased to deal jointly with the protest, in the interests of both nations.

[On the following day the Imperial Chancellor telegraphed to Count Hatzfeldt, as requested.]

VIII. 36

Count Münster, in Paris, to the Chancellor, Caprivi, *July 25th*, 1890

With Your Excellency's kind permission, I went to London for a wedding a few days ago, and there met several leading personages, amongst them Lord Salisbury and Mr. Gladstone. I found feeling in general quite different from what it was shortly before our Treaty, and I am more than ever convinced that it was high time to get it concluded, if the anti-German party was to be prevented from gaining influence and strength. This is now all over. Lord Salisbury confessed to me in confidence that it was the fear of the formation of a pro-Russian party that above all induced him to seek an understanding with us.

As regards the negotiations with France, I found that the

Ambassador Waddington's statements differ entirely from those of Lord Salisbury. M. Waddington told me that according to Lord Salisbury's latest utterances, he hoped soon to win from England all that France desired, whereas Lord Salisbury told me that the French did not seem to know what they wanted, and that MM. Waddington and Ribot were merely demanding concessions in order to keep up their Parliamentary position, and appeared to forget that Lord Salisbury also had his own Parliament to consider.

In regard to Tunis the French had demanded that England should make the permanent treaty with Tunis into a terminable one. He, however, had rejected this at once. No further demands regarding Tunis had been made, and the Italian fears were unfounded. Lord Salisbury also mentioned the report [1] that the French had made a treaty with the Bey of Tunis, claiming the inheritance of that country. He did not believe in it.

Tunis, he continued, was a card that must be in England's hand on account of Egypt. Moreover, any concession made by England in this question would disturb Crispi beyond all measure and drive that rather dangerous statesman into ill-considered and risky enterprises.

With regard to Madagascar he would be able to meet the wishes of the French.

German Note.

By the Agreement of August 5th, 1890, England and France mutually recognised the protectorates over Zanzibar and Madagascar respectively. In addition, the two Powers followed the plan of the Anglo-German Treaty in delimiting their neighbouring possessions in Africa.

As regards the concessions in Africa, the French have now adopted the Hinterland theory and demand the Algerian Hinterland, i.e., the road to Timbuctoo and the regions of the Upper Niger. Lord Salisbury said that the real Hinterland to Algeria was the Sahara Desert, which could well be left to them.

My general impression was that Lord Salisbury wishes to follow Lord Lytton's advice to postpone the negotiations till after the adjournment of the French Chamber.

Lord Salisbury will send two Representatives here to seek an understanding with the French Government on the Hinterland claims.

M. Ribot complains that it is difficult to negotiate with Lord Salisbury during the Parliamentary Session, as he seems to

[1] Declared by M. Ribot to be quite untrue. 'The French Government was not thinking of annexing Tunis.' Telegram from Count Münster, July 25th, 1890.

wish for no conclusion until the adjournment. When I said to M. Ribot that he was more or less in the same position, he agreed.

M. Ribot also said that he had to be so very cautious with the British Government, because public opinion had lately become more hostile towards England, and at the same time less suspicious of Germany.

A proof of this, very pleasing to him, had been reported to him by the Préfet de Police, to the effect that recently when I was driving in an open carriage through a large crowd, someone cried out : ' C'est l'Ambassadeur d'Allemagne ! ' and the crowd had cheered me. This is true and would have been impossible two years ago.

CHAPTER IV

RENEWAL OF THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE

THE FIRST ATTEMPT TO DETACH ITALY

[The original Treaty of Alliance between Austria-Hungary, Germany and Italy, signed at Vienna on May 20th, 1882, had been renewed in 1887 until May 30th, 1892. It became necessary, therefore, to consider a further renewal, and for this purpose Count Caprivi visited Milan in November, 1890, when he had conversations with Signor Crispi. The matter was one in which Great Britain was closely concerned in consequence of the entente between England and Italy and England, Italy and Austria, entered into by Lord Salisbury in 1887 (see Vol. I, Chapters XXI, XXIII, XXIV; an account of the negotiations will also be found in Pribram, *The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary*, Vol. II.]

VII. 55

MEMORANDUM BY THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *November 10th*, 1890

Little more emerged during a second longer conversation with Signor Crispi than from the shorter one.[1] Signor Crispi harked back to the 'ligue commerciale et douanière,' which might develop into a 'lutte commerciale.' He seemed much exercised by the thought of attacking France on the question of Customs through the Triple Alliance and complained of the insincerity of French diplomacy. He desired nothing more earnestly than peace. Seven or eight years were still needed to accomplish the tasks that lay before him in Italy, and for that he must have peace. He was confident about the coming Elections although France was making things as difficult for him as she could. France maintained three Ambassadors in Italy, one at the Quirinal, one at the Vatican, and a third with the Italian Press. This last one would cost her most. Nevertheless, the Triple Alliance was increasingly appreciated by the Italians, and feeling as regarded Austria was improving.

I brought the talk again to England, in order to say that British friendship seemed to me a necessary preliminary for all Italy's Mediterreanean interests. He professed himself to be quite confident about England. . . .

[1] This refers to a conversation on November 7th.

I then opened the subject of Biserta,[1] and said it seemed to me that if anybody had reason to be anxious about this harbour, it was the English. He retorted that a landing in Sicily could easily be carried out from there. I said that French troops and ships would have to be brought to Biserta from elsewhere. He replied that a French Army Corps could be brought to Biserta from Algeria and embarked there. I answered that such a concentration on Biserta would be a long business, and must entail numerous transports, apart from the war-ships, which must come from Toulon—perhaps *post festum*. He and Garibaldi would never have thrust first at Biserta in order to land at Marsala. He made no answer to that, but asked me later whether our General Staff had done any work on Biserta. I said that our General Staff studied every question that turns up ; the British, however, would have more material about Biserta.

On the whole I received the impression that he used my presence to relieve his mind. His position had been much improved by the failure of the Cavalotti demonstration. . . .

[The negotiations that preceded the signing of the Treaty of Triple Alliance (May, 1891) were carried on through the winter and spring of 1890–91, in spite of the efforts of the French to detach Italy from combination with the German Powers.]

VII. 64

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON MARSCHALL, *March 7th*, 1891

Extract.

The Italian Ambassador visited me this afternoon and made the following confidential communication.

Marquis Rudini telegraphed to him the day before yesterday the following :—Signor Ressmann, the Italian Chargé d'Affaires in Paris, had recently been to Rome to report verbally on the present feeling in Paris. On his return to Paris, he had discussed Franco-Italian relations with M. Ribot. M. Ribot's suggestions were as follows : ' que pour mettre le Gouvernement français en mesure de prendre envers l'Italie une attitude ouvertement amicale le Gouvernement italien devrait par des déclarations explicites éliminer les soupçons qui planent sur le but et la portée de la Triple Alliance.—Ce que M. Ribot voudrait, c'est une assurance positive sur le caractère strictement défensif de notre traité en vigueur et plus encore du traité futur, car on présuppose ici qu'on va le renouveler. Si tout au moins on avait la certitude que dans la Triple Alliance il n'y a pas une situation plus menaçante pour la France que la situation qui résulte du traité entre l'Allemagne et l'Autriche, tous les obstacles tomberont et le Gouvernement français serait à son tour prêt à

[1] Cf. F. Crispi's ' Memoirs,' p. 483.

prendre l'engagement formel de ne pas attaquer l'Italie ni de porter atteinte au *statu quo* dans la Méditerranée.' . . .

Count Launay read me the Italian telegram in answer. . . . Italy could not accept the French promise not to attack her, unless it was accompanied by an engagement not to attack Germany and Austria-Hungary also. Ribot's proposals signified an attempt to break up the Triple Alliance and to make Italy a vassal of the French Republic. Such an attempt must be stopped at once. . . .

Having received the Chancellor's instructions, I begged the Ambassador to inform the Marquis Rudini that the Imperial Government entirely concurred with the draft of his reply to the French Government, and was grateful for the loyal and upright feeling displayed in it. We recognised in France's action, not only an attempt to break up the Triple Alliance, but also to strengthen the Francophil Republican party in Italy and to drive a wedge between England and Italy. The friendship between England and Italy was a special thorn in the eye of France, as it was the toughest obstacle to French aspirations in the Mediterranean. The French intentions were clear—namely to draw Italy away from the Triple Alliance and then to isolate her from England and so make her dependent on France. It was remarkable that this attempt on France's part should coincide exactly with the British action with regard to the inspection of the Egyptian Courts, which France held to be injurious to herself, and when France was about to reopen the Egyptian question in opposition to England. Since he could not count on Germany's support, it seemed as if M. Ribot was looking to an alliance with Italy to further this object. Since there existed certain secret agreements between England and Italy with regard to the Mediterranean,[1] I was obliged to enquire whether Ribot's proposals should not be communicated confidentially in London, as well as in Berlin and Vienna. Lord Salisbury would appreciate such a proof of confidence, whereas his feelings would be hurt, if he learnt the facts through an irregular channel. It should be remembered that it was to France's interest to compromise Italy with England, and that this object would be greatly served by spreading the news of a Franco-Italian flirtation.

Count Launay was ready to telegraph at once to Rome in this sense.

German Note.

On February 26th 1891, Count Münster reported that the proposed reform of the administration of justice in Egypt, in the preparation of

[1] Cf. Vol. I, Chapters XX, XXI.

which the British had invited an Italian, and not a Frenchman, to act on the Commission, had been badly received.

VII. 67

Baron von Marschall, in Berlin, to Count Hatzfeldt, in London, *March 9th*, 1891

The foregoing Memorandum will show you that the French Government now considers the moment arrived for separating Italy from the Triple Alliance and also from England. The offer to undertake jointly with Italy the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean is a step directed even more against England's Egyptian policy, than against Germany or Austria, neither of whom are threatening the *status quo*.

Count Münster's report will have indicated to you the agitation with which M. Ribot views the possibility of England's establishing herself in Egypt, and also how he asked our Ambassador 'if he had or was expecting instructions.' M. Ribot probably hopes that Germany also may be inclined to lend her support again to France, in the expectation of thus improving Franco-German relations, as once before in the preliminaries to the peace between France and China.[1]

The attached report from Herr von Schweinitz will show you that Russia, or at any rate the Russian Press, regards the present dispute concerning Egypt as an occasion for diplomatic action at least.

As soon as either the British Minister or the Italian Ambassador informs you that the Italian proposal has reached London, you should lay the fresh material before Lord Salisbury, as a further proof that England must strengthen her Mediterranean fleet and also attend to her relations towards Italy.

[On April 15th, 1891, the Italian Ambassador in Berlin communicated to Count Caprivi a draft for the renewed treaty. This draft, with some alterations, is identical with that which was eventually agreed upon, and is printed by Pribram in his Volume I. The text of Article IX, which especially concerns England, in this draft was as follows :—

'L'Italie et l'Allemagne s'engagent à s'employer pour le maintien du *statu quo* de fait et de droit dans les régions nord-africaines sur la Méditerranée, à savoir la Cyrénaïque, la Tripolitaine, la Tunisie et le Maroc. Les représentants des deux Puissances dans ces régions auront pour instruction de se tenir dans la plus étroite intimité de communications et assistance mutuelles. Si malheureusement le maintien du *statu quo* devenait impossible, l'Allemagne s'engage à appuyer l'Italie en toute action, sous la forme d'occupation ou autre prise de garantie, que cette dernière devrait entreprendre en vue d'un intérêt d'équilibre et de légitime compensation.'

In the treaty as finally settled, this was altered to run as follows :—

'L'Allemagne et l'Italie s'engagent à s'employer pour le maintien du *statuo quo* territorial dans les régions nord-africaines sur la Méditerranée,

[1] Spring of 1884.

à savoir la Cyrénaïque, la Tripolitaine et la Tunisie. Les représentants des deux Puissances dans ces régions auront pour instruction de se tenir dans la plus étroite intimité de communications et d'assistance mutuelles.

'Si malheureusement, en suite d'un mûr examen de la situation, l'Allemagne et l'Italie reconnaissaient l'une et l'autre que le maintien du *statuo quo* devenait impossible, l'Allemagne s'engage, après un accord formel et préalable, à appuyer l'Italie en toute action sous la forme d'occupation ou autre prise de garantie, que cette dernière devrait entreprendre dans ces mêmes régions en vue d'un intérêt d'équilibre et de légitime compensation.

'Il est entendu que pour pareille éventualité les deux Puissances chercheraient à se mettre également d'accord avec l'Angleterre.']

VII. 82

Memorandum by Count Caprivi, *April 23rd*, 1891

Extract.

. . . *Observation on Article IX.* Whilst Article X doubtless contemplates German military support of Italy in the event of an Italian attack upon France, I understand Article IX as referring only to a diplomatic 'appuyer,' but not limited to France as the opponent, and applying to the whole of North Africa. In Morocco this might bring us into conflict with England, and we have a pressing interest in avoiding this, if only for Italy's sake. Italy can enter into no treaty which may be directed against England.

Article VI expresses quite clearly the extent of our obligations to grant diplomatic support to Italy. In this respect No. IX is superfluous and can only make confusion.

I cannot understand how Italy can imagine that a *prise de garantie* will without war indemnify her for a breach of the *status quo* somewhere else. Such a breach could only come from a Mediterranean Power, not allied to Italy—i.e. Turkey or France. Italy can only seek a guarantee against these Powers in territory owned by them. Without a war this is unthinkable. If war breaks out, Article X already permits Italy, without appealing to the fresh Article, to attain her object and to apply the *casus foederis* to us.

I cannot make out what Italy means by such a guarantee, or where it is to come from. If she hopes to seize it from Turkey, before the latter is broken up and while England is still interested in the maintenance of Turkey, England's friendship, without which she cannot move a step in the Mediterranean, will be lost to her. If Italy sought her guarantee on French soil or soil claimed by France, it would mean war for certain on the Rhine and in the Alps, and a fight to a finish before there could be a question of gaining anything.

I hope that it may be certainly possible to convince Italy of the uselessness of Article IX. . . .

CHAPTER V

EGYPT. APRIL TO JUNE, 1890

THE EVACUATION QUESTION AND THE CONVERSION OF THE DEBT

[The documents printed in this and the following chapters are of interest as giving a picture of the European background to the difficulties by which the British Government was met in carrying out the internal reforms in Egypt, and also the constant efforts which were being made to force the British Government into a position by which it would agree to come to a definite undertaking regarding the evacuation of Egypt. The question of internal reform is dealt with by Lord Cromer, Lord Milner and Sir Auckland Colvin in their well-known books on Egypt.]

German Note.

The scheme by which some time earlier the Egyptian Government had arranged with England to convert the 5 per cent. Loan into a 4 per cent. one, was wrecked in 1889 by the refusal of the French Government under Tirard. Freycinet's Government took up the Egyptian question in March, 1890, and for a moment it seemed, since England showed willingness to negotiate on the Conversion question, that the quarrel of many years would end in an understanding between England and France on the Egyptian question. . . .

[The consent of the French to the Conversion scheme was obtained on the following Conditions—

1. The employment of the economies resulting from the conversion was to be the subject of future agreement with the Powers.

2. The Daïra Loan was to be reimbursed at 85 per cent. instead of 80 per cent. as provided by the Law of Liquidation.

3. The sales of Domains and Daïra lands were to be restricted to £E.300,000 a year each, thus prolonging the period of liquidation of those estates.

The interest of the Preference Loan was reduced from 5 to 3½ per cent. and on the Domains from 5 to 4½ per cent.

At this time also the Sultan attempted to force England to name a date for the evacuation of Egypt.]

VII. 267

KIDERLEN, GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, TO COUNT ZU EULENBURG, PRUSSIAN MINISTER AT OLDENBURG, *April 16th*, 1890

Extract.

I am authorised to enclose herewith a copy of a report from Cairo. Do not be alarmed if it begins with a question on which

you are probably quite indifferent, that of the conversion of the Egyptian Debt. The interesting part is that which . . . describes the symptoms of an Anglo-French rapprochement in Egypt. In order to bring before you the significance of England's compliant attitude on the Conversion question, I enclose an extract from a memorandum prepared by myself at the time. The question is connected with an event in Morocco. For a long time we have been trying there—so far without success—to assist our friend the Sultan at Constantinople by setting up direct relations between Turkey and Morocco. Until now England has considered this to be in accordance with her own interests; the French alone intrigued against it. Quite a short time ago the British favoured our action and were willing to support us. Now, all of a sudden, they are beginning to say it will not do, the French will not allow it and must not be irritated, etc. . . .

VIII. 145

WINCKLER, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *April 2nd*, 1890

I learn confidentially that the Turkish Ambassador in London (Rustem Pacha) has been instructed to reopen negotiations with Lord Salisbury regarding the evacuation of Egypt. His instructions call attention to the British Government's repeated promises to retire from Egypt as soon as the feeling there should be tranquillised, the finances re-established and the Egyptian Army sufficiently strengthened to maintain order in the country. As these conditions have, even according to British opinion, now been fulfilled, the Porte considers that the moment has arrived for settling the method of evacuation in consultation with the British Government.

Ever since the failure of Sir Drummond Wolff's Convention [1] the Sultan, who has long realised how much contrary to Turkey's interests was his refusal, at the advice of Russia and France, at the last moment to ratify that Convention, has been occupied continually with the Egyptian question. But he has never been able to make up his mind to empower the Porte to make such concessions to England, as would enable this Power to arrive at fresh agreements respecting evacuation. The recent Trade Convention, concluded between England and Egypt, has given the Grand Vizir an opportunity of explaining to the Sultan that any further delay by Turkey in dealing with the Egyptian question may gradually lead the Khedive into treating the position of dependence on Turkey as no longer existent,

[1] Cf. Vol. I, pp. 235, 245.

and acting as a vassal of the State which really controls his country.

As a result of the Grand Vizir's representations, the Sultan has instructed the Porte to prepare a fresh Draft of a Convention and to submit it for the British Government's acceptance. This Draft, which has been already approved by the Sultan, but is still kept secret here, differs in essentials from that of Sir Drummond Wolff in three points only :—

1. The new Draft accepts none of the decisions included in that Convention regarding the Suez Canal, in consideration of the International Suez Canal Convention concluded since that time.

2. It fixes the time allowance for evacuation of Egypt by the British troops at one year after the conclusion of the Convention.

3. In anticipation of the objection that England has no assurance that the Sultan will ratify the Convention, even if the Draft is agreed, it is laid down that ratification shall take place in London and that a copy of the Convention, already ratified by the Sultan, shall be submitted to the British Government.

There is no indication so far to justify the assumption that the Sultan's decision is to be attributed to Franco-Russian suggestions. But it is clear that the steps taken by the Porte in fulfilment of the Sultan's commands, in its dealings with the British Government, may well enjoy the support of these two Powers, for at least the French Embassy here has for long been increasingly convinced that the French intrigues, directed at the time against acceptance of the Drummond Wolff Convention, served British interests in Egypt at Turkey's expense in a way which was by no means intended.

VIII. 146

RADOWITZ, AMBASSADOR IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *April 9th*, 1890

Confidential.

I beg to lay before you a copy of the Draft of a new Convention regarding Egypt, which came into my hands through a very confidential channel, and which is to be submitted to the British Prime Minister by Rustem Pacha.[1] Lord Salisbury's absence has prevented its being yet communicated in London.

Herr Winckler's report of April 2nd has given the prin ipal points of the Draft. Comparison of the present text with that

[1] Not included.

of the Drummond Wolff Convention of May 22nd, 1887, shows that, apart from the decisions affecting the Suez Canal, which in the meantime were transferred to the Convention of October 29th, 1888, all the essential points of the former one, which the Sultan refused to ratify, are to be *retained*, including the British right of re-occupation, which at that time called forth the violent opposition of the French and Russians. There is no especial reference to ratification in the new text; but there is to be a declaration that the exchange shall take place in London.

As regards the origin of the new Draft, I gather from the confidential statements of the Grand Vizir [1] and Said Pacha [2] that the actual initiative came solely from the Turkish Ministers, who were urged with increasing pressure by the Sultan to re-open negotiations with England on the evacuation of Egypt. Until now the Ministers had been unable to make the Sultan understand that this was only possible, if at all, on the basis of the British right of re-occupation. He now is ready to concede this, and seems to fear Franco-Russian interference less than he did in 1887.

When first the incorrect report in the *Times* was known here, that the Porte wished simply to offer ratification of the old Convention of 1887, M. de Nelidoff (the Russian Ambassador in Constantinople) informed the Grand Vizir at once that the original Russian objections against the Drummond Wolff Convention were not withdrawn, and that such a step by the Porte, without an understanding with St. Petersburg, could not be permitted. Lately, however, the Russian Ambassador confined himself to declaring to the Foreign Minister that he had reported the re-opening of the Egyptian negotiations to St. Petersburg, and was awaiting instructions from there. But he indicated that a possible right of re-occupation by England in its old form could in no case be admitted. When the Turkish action in London was first spoken of, the French Ambassador maintained absolute reserve, and he gave the Grand Vizir the impression that he would raise no objection to the renewal of an attempt at an understanding with England. Kiamil Pacha gathered that the danger of a declaration of independence on the Khedive's part, followed by an alliance between him and England, is feared no less in Paris than here, and that therefore, France would prefer to allow an Anglo-Turkish agreement regarding the date of evacuation, even with the inclusion of the right of re-occupation. Since then, however, Count Montebello, in opposition to the Grand Vizir, apparently at the instigation of the Russian Ambassador, has rejected the British right of re-occupation, just as M. de Nelidoff did.

[1] Kiamil Pacha. [2] Foreign Minister.

My British colleague informs me that he does not expect his countrymen will just yet, at any rate, enter into the new Turkish proposal; he had predicted this for years past. (The EMPEROR: '*I think so too. Beati possidentes.*')

VIII. 148

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *April 5th*, 1890

You are aware that the Egyptian Government's desire to improve its finances by converting its 5 per cent. Preference Debt to a 4 per cent. basis was wrecked last year by the French refusal to agree. As M. Spuller, the Foreign Minister, described this refusal in the Chamber in emphatic terms as necessary and unalterable, France, who soon perceived his mistake, found herself in a dilemma.

The situation offered England a two-fold advantage.

Firstly, the whole odium of having prevented the Conversion rested on France, thus damaging her position in Egypt in every direction; and secondly, the British Government was delighted at getting out of the Conversion scheme in this way. She could not herself refuse it out of consideration for Egypt, whilst the realisation of the scheme would necessarily have made the present Cabinet very unpopular with the numerous British bondholders, who would have received only 4, instead of 5 per cent., for their money.

According to a report of March 23rd from the Imperial Consul-General in Cairo,[1] the British Government intends to offer to help France out of the impasse into which she has fallen. It has sanctioned a Commission of Anglo-Egyptian officials, which is to go to Paris in order to discuss certain proposals recently put forward by France. These proposals differ from the original Egyptian Conversion scheme. Among the changes one of the points is interesting politically.

The French now wish to see the Domains and Daïra Loans also converted. These Loans are under Anglo-French control and administration and form the last relic of the former Anglo-French Condominium in Egypt. On this account France clings closely to this arrangement, whilst until now it has been ever a thorn in England's side. It was, therefore, only natural for England to seek, by means of some such Conversion of the Domains and Daïra Loans, an alteration in the administration, i.e. to get rid of this relic of the Condominium. This also was England's prime object, when she herself proposed the conversion of this Loan a few months ago through Sir Edgar Vin-

[1] Herr Brauer.

cent.[1] It is all the more remarkable that England now gives in so easily to the French demand for a continuation of this Condominium even after some form of Conversion.

We have now the question raised by the Imperial Consul-General in Cairo—whether it indicates that England is *politically* in need of French support.

I beg you to turn your attention to this and other symptoms pointing to an Anglo-French rapprochement, and to report on the result of your observations.

VIII. 149–50

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *April 14th*, 1890

Extract. Very confidential.

. . . Count Tornielli told me in strict secrecy and under an absolute promise not to mention his name, that Lord Salisbury, shortly before his departure, had indicated to him in conversation privately, in connection with the favourable improvement of the Egyptian finances, that the reconquest of the provinces lost by Egypt was contemplated here (i.e. the Sudan, which had been lost to the Mahdists, 1883–5). (The EMPEROR: *'At last! If he does not want it done by the Italian Army!'*)

It seems clear to me that in thus speaking, the Prime Minister's prime object was to bolt the door in time against any Italian yearnings after those Provinces. But if the British Government is thinking of the scheme for the future, indicated to the Italian Ambassador, it would be clear, quite apart from the *arrière pensée* of a political rapprochement with France, that it would allow Sir Evelyn Baring a freer hand in his efforts towards the improvement of the Egyptian finances. . . .

VIII. 151

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *April 29th*, 1890

Very confidential.

My confidential conversation with Lord Salisbury convinces me that the compliance of England on the Conversion question mentioned in the despatch of April 5th is not to be ascribed to a wish for a rapprochement with France, but to the reasons given in my report of the 14th on my very confidential conversation with Count Tornielli.

Lord Salisbury admitted to me quite openly that his aim is to recover the lost Egyptian provinces (The EMPEROR: *'Good!'*), that the British Parliament would never vote money

[1] Chairman of the Ottoman Bank in Constantinople.

for it, and that the improvement of the Egyptian finances is therefore an indispensable consideration. But he particularly added that the lost provinces were a matter for the future, the realisation of which must be postponed for the present.

According to the reports received here, there is little prospect of success for the Egyptian delegates in Paris in their Conversion negotiations, and I imagine that this circumstance contributes to postponing the scheme in question in Egypt.

Lord Salisbury repeatedly assured me that there was here no question of a political rapprochement with France. (The EMPEROR: *'Good!'*)

VIII. 152

COUNT MÜNSTER, IN PARIS, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *April 29th*, 1890

I have found an opportunity of speaking to M. Ribot about Egypt, and my opinion that the French Government will not agree to the conversion of the Egyptian Debt is confirmed. (The EMPEROR: *'Good!'*)

M. Ribot said that it was reported to him that Lord Salisbury had repulsed the Turkish Ambassador in a decided manner. Sir E. Baring's information in Cairo and several other indications make it clear that no concession on England's part on the Egyptian question is to be expected. (The EMPEROR: *'So much the better!'*)

Under these circumstances the present Cabinet would be unable to discuss the Egyptian proposals, however advantageous they might be from the financial point of view.

His predecessor, M. Spuller, had been careless and had made the consent to the Conversion, as proposed a year earlier, depend on the declaration to be made by England regarding evacuation.

If the present Cabinet failed to support the same contention, it would certainly be defeated in the Chamber. M. de Freycinet would become the scapegoat in the matter of Egypt, although it was Gambetta, and not he, who threw Egypt into the arms of England.

The Minister and the official world here are embittered against England. According to the utterances of the British Embassy, the same seems to be the case in London against France. (The EMPEROR: *'May they both long remain in the same condition!'*)

VIII. 153

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *April 29th*, 1890

The Turkish Ambassador has, on the return of Lord Salisbury, opened the question of the evacuation of Egypt and proposed an Agreement.

The Prime Minister informs me in strict confidence that he has given no answer, but intends to reject the proposals, which he qualifies as 'childish'. He has always said that England could only leave Egypt when everything that has been done there by England is assured of permanence. (The EMPEROR: *'This can scarcely be the case for* 100 *years, so he has plenty of time.'*) This end can be attained only if England reserves the right of re-entry in the event of fresh unrest in Egypt or of any danger threatened from outside. The Turkish proposal does not offer this indispensable guarantee and it is therefore unacceptable.

Lord Salisbury's words on the subject gave me the impression that he is further than ever from giving up Egypt, and that he therefore welcomes the fact of Turkey's rejection of the British future right of re-entry as a pretext for refusing to consider any agreement respecting evacuation.

VIII. 154

RADOWITZ, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *May 2nd*, 1890

Cipher telegram.

Sir W. White states that Lord Salisbury has replied to the Turkish Ambassador, regarding the proposal about Egypt, that the Porte should first come to an understanding with Russia and France on the question of the British right of re-entry, and that then some such Convention may be considered.

RADOWITZ TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *May 31st*, 1890

Confidential.

Sir William White has communicated to me in confidence the contents of Lord Salisbury's instructions to him, which lay down precisely the attitude adopted by the Prime Minister in dealing with Turkey with regard to Egypt.

On being approached afresh by Rustem Pacha on the Egyptian question, Lord Salisbury declared as follows:

He sees only two ways of satisfying the Turkish desire for the withdrawal of British troops from Egypt. The first and, in Lord Salisbury's view, the more correct and reasonable, would be to wait quietly until public order has been sufficiently restored in Egypt and the international position of the country appears to be so secure against outside danger, that the necessity for the continued British occupation is automatically done away with. (The EMPEROR: '4–500 *years to wait!*') Once things had gone so well, it would be entirely to the British Government's interest not to prolong the occupation and to retire of its own initiative. It would be Egypt's right to demand it.

The other way would be to determine beforehand the moment for evacuation by a distinct agreement. This had been tried by England in the Drummond Wolff Convention and wrecked by the Sultan's final refusal to ratify an Agreement which was already settled. If to-day Turkey were to come forward again with this demand, in order thus to bring about a decision, he, Lord Salisbury, after the previous experience, could only consent to it under absolutely definite conditions. His main condition was England's unfettered authority to return to Egypt at any time, forthwith and without question, whenever she considered that internal conditions or external dangers rendered it necessary. England would share this authority with no other Power, except perhaps with Turkey alone. Moreover, this right of England's must first be recognised explictly by all the Signatory Powers of the Treaty of Berlin, so that never again, as in connection with the Convention of 1887, should she be met by opposition from any one of them.

Thus Lord Salisbury far exceeds the Wolff Convention, and also the Turkish Draft, in his present demands for the right of re-entry. On this account, he remarked at the end that since the collapse of the Wolff Convention the Italians had established themselves more and more firmly in Abyssinia, and the French had begun to fortify Biserta. These facts were bound to bring the possibility of external dangers for Egypt nearer than before and therefore make England's right of re-entry all the more indispensable.

My British colleague has been furnished for his information with a copy of the instruction forwarded by the French Foreign Minister to Count d'Aubigny,[1] regarding the French assent to the Conversion of the Debt. It contains a special passage relating to the question of the British occupation, which seeks to show that the further retention of British troops in Egypt is no longer justified by present circumstances, and that England's earlier declarations oblige her to withdraw now. Sir William learns that the French Ambassador here has forwarded an extract from it direct to the Sultan (not to the Porte), to prove to him how eagerly France is working for evacuation. (The EMPEROR: '*A good thing to tell them in London.*')

Sir William White is not himself taking part in the negotiations concerning Egypt; he leaves it all to London. He is more than ever convinced that they will make no difference to the present actual situation, and does not suppose that any greater rapprochement between England and France about Egypt is possible. He adds the proviso—' as long as Salisbury's

[1] French Diplomatic Agent and Consul-General in Cairo.

Cabinet or any Conservative one is in power.' It is impossible to say what Gladstone or his friends might do.

VIII. 156

BARON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *June 2nd*, 1890

The Egyptian Government has requested our consent to the Conversion Decree. The Head of the Consulate-General in Cairo has been authorised to-day by telegraph to give consent, as soon as the British Representative receives like authority.

The British Government has requested us to consent at the same time to Article 4, which provides that £E150,000 out of the economies shall be employed yearly to pay off the debts on the land (*Frondienste*).

In order to show our customary goodwill in Egypt towards England on this point also, our representative is empowered to express himself in the same sense as the British Consul-General on this question.

Please inform Lord Salisbury of this.

VIII. 156–7

RADOWITZ, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *June 16th*, 1890

Confidential.

As regards the present situation in the question of Egypt, I gather the following from confidential statements made by the Grand Vizir and the British Ambassador.

The Sultan continues to consider the possibility of obtaining from England a date for evacuation. (The EMPEROR: '*Still?*') He takes very seriously the negotiation, with which Rustem Pacha is entrusted in London. He is encouraged by the French attitude (The EMPEROR: '*Naturally*') not to falter in his demand for evacuation. The Ambassadors of Russia and France are working here for the same end. The French Government has just declared here that it is ready at any time to declare formally that France will never desire to occupy Egypt with troops, when once the British occupation has ceased. (The EMPEROR: '*!*') The right of the protection and defence of this country must belong to the Porte alone. This is intended to set aside the suggestion that, after the British retire, France or some other enemy Power might seize upon Egypt. On the strength of this French declaration, the Sultan has ordered fresh instructions to be sent to Rustem Pacha to continue the negotiations.

The Grand Vizir puts little trust in the French promise and points to the French action in Tunis. He himself no longer believes in an understanding with England regarding evacua-

tion, but he intends to keep the Sultan going with the negotiations as long as possible. (The EMPEROR: *'He knows well how to do that.'*)

VIII. 157

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *June 29th*, 1890

Cipher.

Lord Salisbury states confidentially that the Turkish Ambassador has resumed negotiations respecting evacuation and submitted a fresh scheme. He remarked to me with a certain satisfaction that this scheme was even less acceptable than the former one, since it provided for a definite date for evacuation.

VIII. 158

RADOWITZ, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *August 19th*, 1890

On August 8th, Lord Salisbury wrote to Rustem Pacha in London in reply to the Turkish Ambassador's Note on the Egyptian affair. This reply has now been submitted to the Sultan in translation, and the Grand Vizir and Said Pacha inform me that it has made a very painful impression on His Majesty.

Sir William White has already told me what the reply contains. Lord Salisbury refuses absolutely to conclude any convention at all, which names a date for the evacuation of Egypt by the British troops. But even at this juncture he expresses the emphatic hope that the moment will arrive, when, her task completed, England will be able to retire from Egypt and hand the country over to its own Government in perfect order. But this moment cannot be fixed in advance and the appointment of any date would, as experience had shown, only contribute to destroy confidence in the maintenance of the order which had been established in Egypt by England, and England alone.

So the Turkish attempts, chiefly carried on by the Sultan in person, to bind England by a promise with regard to evacuation, may be regarded as having ceased for good. Till now it was not expressed here in that form, but rather that the principle of the settlement of a date for evacuation, as laid down in the Drummond Wolff Convention of 1887, had not yet been rejected by England. Since the Sultan's refusal to ratify that Convention, the Grand Vizir and Said Pacha certainly no longer failed to realise the true objects of British policy in Egypt. But the Sultan himself clings obstinately to the hope of obtaining

evacuation by means of further negotiation, and the French and Russians continue to encourage him in this view.

Kiamil Pacha and Said Pacha do not realise the effect that the British reply will have on the Sultan. The personal positions of these Ministers may be adversely affected, all the more, as the Sultan realises that the present impasse has been produced by himself alone, through his rejection at the last minute of the Convention concluded by Kiamil and Said.

CHAPTER VI

EGYPT. FEBRUARY, 1891–APRIL, 1892

THE CONVERSION OF THE DEBT, AND THE QUESTION OF TURKISH SUZERAINTY

[The British plan for easing the financial situation in Egypt raised violent opposition in France. It was, however, carried through with complete success, and the consent of France was secured by certain concessions, which were made easy by the rapid increase of prosperity in Egypt.

At the same time the Sultan, Abdul Hamid, re-opened the question of the British evacuation of Egypt. The intrigues of France and Russia encouraged him to press his demands and to negotiate in secret and against the advice of the Grand Vizir and the Ministry. The German Government used every effort to neutralise the French influence over the Sultan and to bring about a peaceful solution of the problem by an acknowledgment of the Sultan's Suzerainty over Egypt, with the exclusion of any demand for evacuation at a definite date.]

VIII. 159

COUNT MÜNSTER, IN PARIS, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *February 26th*, 1891

The British interference in the administration of justice in Egypt and the intended reorganisation of the Egyptian Courts has made an extremely bad impression here.

The comparative neglect shown by the Press to this matter is accounted for by the fact that even the French Government is not quite clear what part to play and how best to challenge England.

It appears that the administration of justice and the Courts in particular are corrupt, arbitrary and unjust, in fact, a mockery of Law, and that Sir Evelyn Baring has long been demanding their reform.

He got Mr. Scott, formerly of the Egyptian Service, transferred from India, where he was a judge, and had a scheme of reform prepared.

In October Mr. Scott was here, in order to become acquainted with French methods of justice. In November he returned to Cairo and prepared a scheme, which was sent for approval to Lord Lytton, the Ambassador.

The latter held that the proposals were much too far-reaching, because Mr. Scott suggested a purely English system of Police Courts with the native element almost entirely eliminated, and it occurred to Lord Lytton that this would make the Egyptian flame, which is always smouldering, burn up with the greatest violence.

Lord Salisbury seems to have shared Lord Lytton's doubts, and he has instructed Sir E. Baring to appoint a Commission, consisting of Mr. Scott, a European judge, and an Egyptian, to deliberate on the organisation of justice.

The Khedive is to issue a decree, appointing Mr. Scott as his Judicial Adviser, with a salary of £2,000 sterling, after the pattern of the Financial Adviser.

To this Commission no Frenchman, but an Italian, is appointed; the appointment of an Italian is taken ill here. So far no Egyptian has been willing to serve, and the affair has nearly caused a Ministerial crisis.

This British action in Egypt is most unwelcome to the French Government. For the Prime Minister, Freycinet, Egypt is the vulnerable point owing to his fear of attacks in the Chamber, and the likelihood of evacuation becomes less and less.

The French forget that in Tunis they are doing just what they reproach the British with, and are not even thinking of retiring from Tunis.

The French representative, d'Aubigny, has been sent for to report orally on the Egyptian situation. It is probable that he will be recalled, as he is considered to be too compliant towards the British and too friendly with Sir Evelyn Baring. Before he left Cairo, he was instructed to declare to the Egyptian Government that France would not renew her consent to the employment of the surplus in future, and protested against the proposed reorganisation of the judicial authorities being undertaken without French co-operation.

The French Ambassador, Waddington, has been instructed to declare the same to Lord Salisbury.

Lord Lytton tells me that the French threat will not be successful.

As regards the surplus, the Egyptian finances are in such a good state, that neither the British nor the Egyptian Government pays much attention to it.

The British reply to the second point is that, as the International Tribunal remains quite unaffected, the organisation of the inferior Courts is Egypt's affair alone.

M. Ribot spoke of it to me yesterday with some excitement and asked whether I had any communications or instructions respecting the affair. I said that I had none.

The Minister was sure that the British were preparing far worse surprises in Egypt. The commercial treaties with Egypt and other States were to expire on March 20th, and Egypt would then follow England's advice and bring in a tariff, ignoring the Porte and without negotiation with the other Powers. This could not possibly be allowed.

The bad feeling against England with M. Ribot and the whole French political world is greatly on the increase, and will go still further, when England's action in Egypt is more thoroughly understood.

VIII. 161

RADOWITZ, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *April 1st*, 1891

Sir William White has just been instructed to warn the Porte against any further steps in Egypt, prompted by the complaints raised by Russia and France on the question of the Trade Convention and the appointment of the Judicial Adviser. If Turkey, in obedience to Russian and French suggestion, brings pressure upon the Egyptian Government, the latter will be forced to declare its complete independence all the sooner. Sir William should remind the Porte of what followed the refusal to ratify the Wolff Convention, which was done under Franco-Russian advice.

My British colleague showed me these instructions and added that he had had doubts about carrying them out, and had informed Lord Salisbury of this. He feared that, if such a declaration by him came to the knowledge of the Sultan, it would only increase his suspicion and tend to further all the Russian-French intrigues, which aim at setting the Porte at enmity with Egypt, and therefore with England. It would be a different matter if such advice were offered to the Sultan by friendly Powers, such as Germany or Austria, who have no political interests of their own to pursue in Egypt. He had therefore replied to Lord Salisbury that he desired to discuss this matter with his German and Austrian colleagues, who might perhaps be able to give a confidential hint to the Porte.

I replied to my British colleague that he knew that we had always acted in this sense here and had recommended to the Porte a cautious policy in Egypt. We had also given our utmost support at the time to the efforts to bring the Wolff Convention into existence and to get it ratified. I was convinced that there was no need at this moment to bring special influence to bear on the Porte with regard to its attitude towards the Egyptian Government. The Turkish Minister had already said that the recent Franco-Russian efforts to embitter the relations between

the Porte and the Khedive had been unavailing, and Kiamil Pacha had judged the game correctly from the beginning. I did not believe, therefore, that we are now called upon to approach the Sultan in person on the Egyptian question. The less his attention is directed to it, the better.

Baron Calice shares this opinion.

I discussed the Egyptian question to-day with the Grand Vizir. He mentioned that on account of the way in which the Sultan took it, he still felt it necessary to arrive at a formal, direct understanding with England, entirely dropping the question of evacuation, which had caused the ruin of the Wolff Convention, and merely insisting in principle on the maintenance and recognition of the Turkish suzerainty over Egypt. He was preparing a proposal to this effect, but begged me to treat this remark in the meantime as entirely personal and confidential. He was especially anxious to introduce this proposal, before it was known of by the French and Russians.

I cannot imagine how he expects to succeed, considering how things are in the Yildiz Kiosk, and the activities of Munir Bey, before whom, as '*Chef de la Correspondance turque*' in the Foreign Office, everything in this department comes. In any case Sir William White will still refer all Egyptian business to London, where alone there is a chance of getting anything done.

(Marschall: '*I think that Herr von Radowitz is right, and that we should wait quietly until England asks us to intervene with the Sultan.*')

VIII. 163

Baron von Marschall to Radowitz, in Constantinople, *April 17th*, 1891. (Sent on the *25th*.)

In your report of April 1st, you mention that the Grand Vizir considers it essential for Turkey to come to a firm agreement with England concerning Egypt, dropping entirely the evacuation question, and recognising Turkish suzerainty over Egypt. It is to be hoped that the British Government will, in spite of the favourable position in which the Turkish rejection of the Wolff Convention places it, still be ready for an understanding, assuming that as compensation for the express recognition of Turkish suzerainty, which is asked for by the London Cabinet, the Turks will give up any mention of the question of evacuation. It is certain that an Anglo-Turkish understanding is in Turkey's interest, for in the present world-situation more cases are conceivable, in which Turkey may need England's support, than the reverse. England's interest in keeping the Straits in the possession of Turkey will be considerably increased

if a solution is found for the Egyptian affair, and thereby the only question which might conceivably form the starting-point for Russo-Franco-Turkish action against England is got out of the way.

I beg you to find a suitable opportunity, when conversation with the Grand Vizir turns naturally, without your initiative, on to the Egyptian question, to speak to Kiamil Pacha in the above sense. If he expresses the wish that we should undertake to sound Lord Salisbury as to his attitude towards an Anglo-Turkish understanding, you will indicate, *as from yourself*, that we might perhaps be ready to do this, but that our intervention would only be useful, if the consent, not only of the Grand Vizir, but of the Sultan also, not to mention evacuation, were secured beforehand.

[The following despatch may be said to mark the start of the paramount influence which Germany gained eventually over Turkey.[1]]

IX. 61

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO RADOWITZ, IN CONSTANTINOPLE,
April 25th, 1891

Secret.

If the Sultan is now inclined to draw nearer to England by means of an understanding regarding Egypt on the lines of my despatch of April 17th, the formal recognition by England of his suzerainty over Egypt may offer an opportunity for obtaining fresh guarantees for the protection of the most important and most threatened portions of his Empire, Constantinople and the Straits.

The Sultan already has the right to appeal to the British Fleet for protection, if the Straits are menaced. But Turkey's attitude towards England in recent years (the rejection of the Egyptian Agreement and the fortifying of the Dardanelles) may well have raised doubts in London as to whether England would have to consider Turkey as an enemy or as an ally in any future complications which may arise. If the Sultan does nothing in this direction, he may have to contemplate the appearance of a British fleet with hostile intentions in the Straits. On the other hand, the rapid increase of the Russian forces in the Black Sea points to the possibility of a threat to Constantinople on that side. Thus it must be to Turkey's interest to make certain in advance of England's help against such an event. The Sultan's best way to attain this will be to come to an immediate understanding on Egypt by negotiation with England and to add to it an engagement to call for British assistance, the moment that the Straits are threatened from the Black Sea. This would

[1] Cf. Chap. XXVIII.

have to be rendered. If England agreed to this engagement, the Sultan would not only have solidified his position against an outbreak of war, but would also have found means to stop any Russian idea of forcible action against Constantinople or any other part of the Turkish Empire. The improvement of feeling attained in this way between England and Turkey would doubtless move the former to greater compliance with the Sultan's wishes on other points also.

If your knowledge of the conditions in Constantinople lead you to think that an idea of this sort might appeal to the Grand Vizir and the Sultan, and that there is no objection against sounding them in this sense—especially with regard to possible indiscretions—you are authorised to open the question with the Grand Vizir, as from yourself, without betraying that you are commissioned to do so, and to indicate to him that you personally consider that we might perhaps use our influence in favour of such an agreement between England and Turkey, if the Sultan desired it.

I beg you to refrain for the present from informing your British colleague of the foregoing suggestions, and to confine yourself at first to recommending the Grand Vizir in conversation, if he falls in with the idea, to mention it only to the Sultan.

If he meets with the Sultan's approval, the latter himself, or the Grand Vizir with his authority, might suggest it to Sir William White as his own idea, and so find out Sir William's views on the subject.

If you consider the proposal wholly inadvisable—or at least in the form that I suggest—I beg you to write me your views on the matter.

VIII. 165

RADOWITZ, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI,
May 5th, 1891

Very confidential.

I have received the despatches of April 17th and 25th.

I have found no difficulty in carrying out the directions forwarded to me in confidential conversation with the Grand Vizir. A remark made by Kiamil himself gave me the opportunity. It appears that he is busy with the scheme for an early agreement with England regarding the formal recognition and confirmation of the Sultan's sovereign rights in Egypt, on the condition that the evacuation question is dropped. He regrets that he has not yet brought the Sultan into line. He told me that his instructions to Rustem Pacha, together with a draft convention, had been long since prepared, and only required the Sultan's assent.

I enquired what, in his opinion, was keeping the Sultan from consenting to an Agreement so greatly to the interest of Turkey's policy. He replied with a shrug : ' His Majesty is always asking Frenchmen and Russians what he ought to do in Egypt,' and from them he naturally hears only an echo of the fatal advice which caused him to reject the Wolff Convention. Their advice is the same now, as then :—under no circumstances must he even indirectly recognise the presence of the British in Egypt, and only deal with them, if they declare beforehand their readiness to leave the country. If they refuse, it will be better to leave everything in its present condition, continue protesting and await what the future may bring. He would then at least be clinging to the ' principle ' and reserving all his rights for later on. Also the Sultan still remembers the French and Russian threats of the summer of 1887 and fears that, as soon as he has made an Agreement with England about Egypt, these two Powers will make a precedent of it and occupy other parts of his Empire, offering him the same arrangements with the same rights as he has granted to the British. The Sultan is asking, as he did in 1887,—who will protect him against such an eventuality ?

The Grand Vizir added that he had not yet succeeded in freeing the Sultan from these doubts, constantly nourished by the French and Russians. His dislike of any agreement with the British on any subject but that of evacuation, had, on the contrary, increased. But he, the Grand Vizir, held it his duty not to relax his efforts to enlighten the Sovereign on the true state of affairs and the dangers of prolonged hesitation. The Sultan would be obliged to assure the continuance of his suzerainty over Egypt by agreement with England as soon as possible. It was no longer a matter of a respite for the removal of the British troops from Egypt, but of the whole future of the Turkish Caliphate.

My many confidential conversations with Kiamil Pacha have taught me how seriously he regards this question, and how recent years have strengthened his conviction that the welfare of Turkey depends on the amount of interest which England takes in the maintenance of Turkish powers, and which she is in a position to manifest by deeds.

The Grand Vizir believes firmly that any continuance of the irregular situation in Egypt will end in a declaration of independence by the Khedive, with England's consent, and that then England and the rest of the Powers will come to an understanding on the new situation, at Turkey's expense alone. For Turkey the independence of Egypt would be only the beginning of further losses of territory. Tripoli would follow, and—Kiamil

Pacha laid particular stress on this—Turkish rule in Arabia (Yemen) would not long survive. However, the Grand Vizir regards an agreement concluded at the right time with England on the principle of maintaining the Turkish suzerainty over Egypt as a barrier against these dangers, and he hopes to start this by awakening England's political interest in Turkey and turning it to the Sultan's uses. He is following exactly the suggestions contained in Baron Marschall's despatch of April 17th, and it now merely depends on the measure of his success in guiding the Sultan into the right path.

I have meanwhile told the Grand Vizir, as from myself and without reference to instructions, that I consider the understanding, which he seeks with England on the subject of Egypt, to be wise and desirable, and if the Sultan questions me, I shall merely reply in this sense. Whether it will be possible for us to give aid in London towards the conclusion of an agreement will certainly depend on what is demanded here. Any renewal of negotiations about a date for evacuation must be cut out as out of the question. If the question comes before me, I should be glad to report further to Your Excellency.

After Bairam the Grand Vizir hopes to bring the matter strongly before the Sultan and see what can be done. Above all, he hopes to arrange that His Majesty may entirely free his judgment on the matter from the French and Russian point of view and consider the interests of Turkey alone. The Grand Vizir is to inform me in confidence of the result of his conversations.

VIII. 166

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *June 6th*, 1891

Secret.

After our business conversation, Lord Salisbury, for an exception, had a little time to himself and was inclined to talk. Our conversation was quite confidential and unconstrained, and was on general questions of policy. Referring to a recent robbery of a train in Turkey, the Minister asked if I could not use my influence with the Sultan, which he knew to be great, to secure greater public safety there. Half in joke, as he sometimes does, he expressed regret that I could not at the same time be accredited to Constantinople, so as to be able to arrange things better there. In the same light tone, which he particularly enjoys when in a good humour, and which I have often used in difficult questions, in order to learn his opinion by suddenly throwing in a new idea, I replied that I also regretted heartily not being accredited to the Sultan. He, Lord Salisbury, knew that all political questions

affecting Turkey especially interested me, and I certainly thought that much might have been done there much better than it had been up till now. If I had a free hand in Constantinople and could follow my own inspirations there, I might perhaps not withstand the temptation to give a different turn to several of the questions, in which England was most interested. He asked me what my ideas were, and I answered that he knew I had always thought it a very great mistake of the Sultan's to refuse to ratify the Wolff Convention and so fail to improve his relations with England. I could not to-day imagine why an understanding regarding Egypt, which would render harmless the French intrigues in Constantinople, should not be possible, once the Sultan saw or was convinced that it was no longer a question of evacuation by the British, and also that the political advantage accruing to him out of such an agreement would amply justify his giving up this contention ; that is, assuming that he was accorded in exchange the formal recognition of his suzerainty. Another mistake of the Sultan's, which had often struck me, was that, in my opinion, he had never drawn a practical inference in his own interests from various incidents and various public speeches delivered by Lord Salisbury, to the effect that, if Turkey were attacked, England was bound by treaty to protect her, if the Sultan should appeal for British assistance. I had also observed the true cause of the suspicion of the Sultan, which I had so often noticed in him, Salisbury, and had sometimes tried to combat in vain. This was that he, Lord Salisbury, was never convinced that the Sultan really meant to make timely use of his treaty rights, if he were attacked. If this uncertainty could be removed by some formal engagement on the part of the Porte on the occasion of an Agreement regarding Egypt, the Sultan would be protected against future eventualities, and the consciousness of this would make him forget the fears which had so often influenced his policy and caused him to waver to and fro between Russia and England. The chief gainers, however, by this alteration would be England, and his, Lord Salisbury's, policy, which would then rest on a secure basis in the East. Apart from my personal friendship for the Sultan, the question interested me, because I held the possibly incorrect view—one which my Government might perhaps not share—that the cause of European peace, which we all had in mind, would be best served by firmer and more intimate relations between England and the Porte. Unfortunately it was only a pious wish, as far as I was concerned, as it was not likely that I should be accredited to Constantinople, and even if it were so, it was still less likely that I could pursue my own policy there.

. . .

If I had at my disposal in the Turkish Ambassador in London an individual possessed of sufficient comprehension of the great political questions and enjoying not merely the Sultan's personal confidence, but also the power of communicating direct with him without the necessity of employing intermediaries, I should unhesitatingly request authority to inform the Sultan through Rustem Pacha, in my own name, that the proposals in question are calculated to serve his interests and that I understand that they will probably be well received here. Rustem Pacha is a personal friend of mine, and I think I can count on his discretion. But to my regret the Turkish Representative is so much disabled by illness and old age, that I cannot be quite sure of his capacity to understand such a question or to pass on my communication to the Sultan correctly enough to ensure that no wrong impression is made upon him. This is essential. . . .

In the event of Your Excellency's decision to make the communication to the Grand Vizir through the Imperial Ambassador, I venture to repeat shortly my reasons for suggesting that the observance of the strictest discretion is necessary on account of Lord Salisbury. Our conversation was not only most confidential, but, as Your Excellency knows, it was fully understood to be carried on half in joke and not as an official exchange of personal ideas. I do not doubt that Lord Salisbury imagines that it is not my intention to make capital out of it, or to report it officially, and he would probably be very disagreeably surprised, if, through any indiscretion, Sir William White became aware of it, and a report went so far that Lord Salisbury's most confidential utterances had through me come to the knowledge of the Turks without his sanction. I hope Your Excellency will agree that the Prime Minister's confidence in me of many years' standing, which has often allowed me to discuss with him the most difficult and delicate questions without constraint or the slightest risk of indiscretion, has been too valuable to us with regard to the future, for it to be thrown away without absolute necessity for the sake of some conceivable political gain in Constantinople.

VIII. 171

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *June 13th*, 1891

Very confidential.

I have read your report of June 6th on the possibility of our helping to promote an Anglo-Turkish rapprochement, with the greatest interest, and express my deep gratitude for your detailed description of the state of affairs.

I fully agree with you that we consider it of the highest importance to us to maintain, as hitherto, Lord Salisbury's

personal trust in yourself and in our policy in general, and that we must not risk losing it for the sake of a success, doubtful at the best, in the question at issue.

I regret that I must also agree with you that at present no practical method can be found for action in Constantinople.

I think we must refrain from acting through the Imperial Ambassador in Constantinople on account of the indiscretions which are always to be feared there. Action through the Turkish Ambassador here is absolutely impossible, as long as Tewfik Pacha occupies the post. We have proofs that communications made to Tewfik Pacha by us have at once found their way to the French Embassy.

You yourself write that Rustem Pacha's assistance, which I should have considered the best combination from my knowledge of him, as he used to be, is questionable owing to the failure of his mental energy, and I am obliged to leave it to your decision whether Rustem Pacha is of any use at all for confidential communications to the Sultan. You alone can judge and have sufficient personal knowledge.

I know from various sources that unfortunately the character of the present British Representative at the Golden Horn seems less adapted for an increased activity in British policy in Constantinople than was the case a few years ago, even if Lord Salisbury should be determined on it.

Nevertheless, I consider it essentially indicated that you, with your proved skill and in the same private and academic form, should continue to keep alive the Prime Minister's interest in and comprehension of his country's position on the Bosphorus, as being the foundation of all energetic foreign policy on the part of England.

VIII. 172

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO RADOWITZ, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, *June 19th*, 1891

Telegram.

Please refrain for the present from any further raising of the question mentioned in despatches of April 25th and May 5th. Despatch follows by to-morrow's courier.

The same to the same, June 21st, 1891

Secret.

With reference to my telegram of the 19th, I beg to inform you very confidentially that we have reason to suppose that the British Cabinet desires to postpone all further action, until the excitement, which has taken possession of public opinion

owing to the articles and debates on Anglo-Italian relations, has entirely died down.

For this reason I beg you to avoid yourself introducing the subject of Anglo-Turkish relations into any discussion for the present. If the Grand Vizir speaks of it for any reason, you should listen to what he has to say, but avoid giving Kiamil Pacha the impression of any alteration in our conviction that a rapprochement with England is desirable.

VIII. 173

RADOWITZ, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *June 26th*, 1891

Cipher telegram. Confidential.

The Grand Vizir is discouraged. He informed me in confidence yesterday that his attempt to persuade the Sultan to accept a Convention regarding Egypt, with no reference to evacuation, has in the last few days been wrecked by other advisers. The Sultan now wishes to return to the former proposal and has, on the advice of Shakir Pacha, his Chief Aide-de-Camp, enquired of the French whether they will still support his earlier protest against the former evacuation Convention, which included the British right of re-entry.

Count Montebello's answer was that France would cease to oppose this right, if England would agree to a date for evacuation. The Sultan regards this French 'admission' as a success and wishes to propose a Convention on these lines. First, however, he will make enquiries in London through a *German* intermediary! I told Kiamil Pacha it was quite useless to make such a suggestion to us. We could only support what was of use as a basis for a rapprochement between England and Turkey, whereas to propose such a Convention now would produce the opposite effect. The Sultan did not mention it to me to-day, but he merely indicated that he wished to gain our support in an important matter, which was still unsettled. Sir William White knows of the incident and says that a Convention including evacuation is quite out of the question. If that were excluded, he thinks that a Convention would be acceptable.

VIII. 174

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *June 29th*, 1891

Telegram.

It will be well for you to inform the Turkish Ambassador of the contents of our latest telegram from Constantinople. You will indicate to him, as from yourself, that England is our friend and France our adversary. The result, therefore, for the Sultan of a Turkish rapprochement towards France, will be

that Germany, the most disinterested of the Powers of Europe, will at once be further estranged from him.

If the Turkish Ambassador expresses the wish to communicate his Sovereign's reply to you, you cannot deny this to him.

As regards the order of events, it may be well for the Turkish Ambassador to enlighten you on the state of the Sultan's feelings towards Germany, *before* the settlement of Anglo-Turkish relations is proceeded with.

VIII. 174

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE,
June 30th, 1891

Telegram. Secret.

Rustem Pacha deeply regrets the turn of affairs in Constantinople and especially the leaning towards France. He nevertheless at first showed great anxiety at the prospect of a direct communication to the Sultan, as the latter might turn his resentment for it against him personally. Finally he saw that it was his patriotic duty not to refuse this task and declared his readiness for it, on the express condition that in writing direct to the Sultan, he might refer to me personally as his authority and might confine himself to a verbal repetition of my confidential utterances. I see no objection to this, and if no better way offers, unless I am directed otherwise by telegraph, I shall dictate to-morrow to Rustem Pacha a connected statement, which he is to repeat in the strictest confidence, as from myself.

In spite of my words to-day, Rustem Pacha is still determined to propose to Lord Salisbury to-morrow to re-open orally the Egyptian negotiations in general, but without reference to the evacuation question.

VIII. 175

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE,
July 2nd, 1891

Cipher telegram. Secret.

In connection with the foregoing.

The Turkish Ambassador carried out his intention of re-opening orally the Egyptian negotiations in general. He informed me yesterday that Lord Salisbury referred to a letter on the same subject which he had directed to the Ambassador on August 8th of last year.[1] Its main point was that the British Government could not in any way discuss any definite date for evacuation. During yesterday's conversation the Prime

[1] Cf. p. 68.

Minister merely added a few general remarks, to the effect that the necessity of considering British public opinion was making an understanding ever more difficult, as the conviction was growing here that England could not give up Egypt. The British Government would be unable to repeat the offer of the same advantages which the Wolff Convention had conceded to the Sultan.

I am to meet Rustem Pacha to-morrow to settle definitely with him the text of the communication to be directed to the Sultan.

IX. 63

Memorandum by Baron von Marschall, written at Windsor Castle, *July 6th*, 1891

To-day I had a long conversation with Lord Salisbury, covering almost every question of present-day European politics.[1] Our discussion, which was of quite informal character, was begun by the Prime Minister with the remark that the general outlook of the European situation was favourable at this moment, and that there were no burning questions awaiting solution. I replied that I shared his opinion that the present atmosphere was peaceful. We certainly must not blind ourselves to the fact that French policy was governed more than ever by thoughts of revenge, and that Russia, in spite of the apparent reserve she was taking pains to show, and the peaceful intentions of the Tsar, still continued to arm and thereby betrayed her intention of seeking to realise her schemes by force of arms, when the time arrived. Lord Salisbury agreed. He is sure that Russia still hopes to possess Constantinople and the Straits, and her present attitude of waiting for the re-arming of her forces, which is now in progress, shows that she hopes that the next General Election in England will provide a change of Ministry and a less determined attitude in foreign policy.

Lord Salisbury then enquired which way we considered that Russia would be likely to choose for getting Constantinople and the Straits into her power. I answered that probably even in Russia this point was not clearly determined. It was not impossible that, in spite of all military objections, Russia might select the way through the Black Sea and risk the attempt to overpower Constantinople and the Straits at one blow. The fact that the Bosphorus was very weakly fortified, and the Dardanelles very strongly—Lord Salisbury interrupted: 'We have to thank Bismarck for that'[2]—as well as the great moral advantage to be gained by seizing the Turkish capital, might

[1] Cf. Sir S. Lee, *King Edward VII*, I, 667. [2] Cf. Vol. I, p. 198.

be so tempting as to drive the military objections into the background. Prince Bismarck had, as we all knew, only recently published in his newspapers his opinion that the Russians would probably choose this way, and that their sole object in massing troops on the Galician border was to tie down the Austro-Hungarian army there.

Lord Salisbury replied that the Russians would scarcely let themselves be caught in what in military parlance is termed a 'mousetrap'. Moreover, the British fleet, possibly reinforced by the Italians, would be there in time to prevent a blow at Constantinople. I remarked that one Russian war-ship would suffice to make the Sultan agree to all that the Russians wanted. Lord Salisbury answered that he had recently discussed the question with the Admiral, who was of opinion that the fleet could be on the spot in time. Of course the fleet could not lie continuously in Besika Bay, but on the other hand, Russia could not prepare an expedition against Constantinople without the outside world knowing something of it. So long as the Dardanelles remained in Turkish hands, the passage would present no great difficulties to the British fleet. It would be a different matter if the Russians were allowed time to seize them. Lord Salisbury considered that the Russians would, as in the last war, probably choose the way through Roumania and Bulgaria. On my remarking that under these circumstances it was highly important to keep Roumania on the side of the Central Powers, the Prime Minister answered that the pro-Russian sympathies of the present Ministry (that of M. Florescu, with M. Escarcu as Foreign Minister) [1] made this unlikely. I agreed, but explained that it was because of this circumstance that advice from England would obtain better results than the same from Austria or ourselves. England, not being a directly interested Power, would receive a better hearing than Austria or Germany, if she were, on the basis of the experience gained in the last Russo-Turkish campaign, to picture at Bucarest the dangers which would threaten Roumania in any connivance towards Russian plans of aggression. Lord Salisbury admitted the correctness of this notion and promised to consider it more closely.

Turning now to Bulgaria, he praised Prince Ferdinand, and more especially Stambuloff, who had shown rare skill in maintaining order in the midst of the greatest difficulties and had raised his country both politically and economically.

I admitted that the present regime in Bulgaria, in spite of its illegality, was an asset for order and declared that Germany would not press for a change of conditions there, so long as no

[1] This Ministry was succeeded in December by that of M. Catargi.

guarantee for the continuance of peace and order was offered. For the rest we should continue to act with the greatest reserve regarding Bulgaria. Germany's first duty was to hold France, which was thirsting for revenge, in check. For twenty years we had fulfilled this duty at great sacrifice to ourselves, and, I added jokingly, the real advantage arising out of this situation had been England's. Again, we had to consider our neighbour Russia and the Tsar in particular, who regarded the removal of the present regime in Bulgaria rather as a matter of personal honour ; and finally we were confronted by the fact that through Prince Bismarck's influence on public opinion it had gradually come to be a profession of faith that Germany is neither interested in the Balkan Peninsula nor affected directly by the question of the possession of the Straits and Constantinople. 'The bones of the Pomeranian Grenadier' had become winged words with us. We had to reckon with this trend of public opinion all the more, since Prince Bismarck continued to use his still strong influence in this direction. Only lately, as Lord Salisbury knew, the paper which was his organ had deprecated the Emperor's visit to England. The situation demanded our greatest caution, but it would not prevent England being able to count on our constant sympathy and support, when it was a matter of maintaining and strengthening her influence in the East—always on the assumption that England was prepared to guard her own interests at the decisive moment. Here Lord Salisbury broke in with vehemence : 'Vous pouvez compter sur nous, tant que le gouvernement actuel est au pouvoir ; nous y serons à temps.' He naturally could not predict what another Government might do. He knew one man, who assuredly would not continue his policy, and that was Gladstone. But he was broken in health and no longer fit to lead a Government. Harcourt's opinions were unknown to him, but Lord Rosebery would act exactly as he, Salisbury, would.

The Prime Minister went on to remark that German influence, which had formerly been paramount in Constantinople, impressed him just now as having become 'minime'. I replied that I was bound so far to agree with him as to admit that our position on Constantinople was at the moment no longer the same as it had been ; I could not yet find a clear explanation of this phenomenon, but of one thing I was certain, namely, that we were sharing England's fortune there. Montebello and Nelidoff, who gave the impression of being at daggers drawn on the Bethlehem question, pursued, regarding Egypt, a joint policy, which was successful in making the Sultan suspicious of England and the Powers friendly to her. Until some understanding about Egypt was arrived at between England and the Sultan,

this game would continue to be played with the same success. 'But I am ready,' said Lord Salisbury, 'to conclude this Convention; it is only the evacuation question that I cannot discuss.' The task is then, I continued, to explain to the Sultan that any understanding with England, even if it includes nothing but recognition of the Sultan's suzerainty, will be of far greater advantage to him than the present false situation. Lord Salisbury agreed and said that for the Sultan the decisive point in the Egyptian question was the Caliphate. Unfortunately Sir William White was ill, which made it difficult to bring influence to bear on the Sultan.

Lord Salisbury asked what we thought of the Bethlehem question. I replied that we did not believe that it was causing any serious quarrel between France and Russia, for France would only pursue the religious question up to the point, where there was danger of conflict with Russia. It might, however, well be asked whether France was not contemplating Syria as a political field of operations, whence to challenge the British occupation of Egypt and to provide compensation for herself at a future date.[1]

German Note.

In May, 1891, a quarrel between Roman Catholic and Greek monks about the use of an entrance into the Cave of the Nativity at Bethlehem had led to bloodshed. Owing to the violence with which Count Montebello represented the cause of his co-religionists with the Porte, on the strength of the French claim to protect the Roman Catholic Institutions in the East, the incident led to a *bellum diplomaticum* with the Russian Ambassador.

VIII. 175–6

RADOWITZ, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *July 28th*, 1891

Confidential.

I hear confidentially that by the Sultan's command the Porte has ordered Rustem Pacha, who has already been allowed to go on leave, to return to his post in London forthwith. On his return he will find orders to communicate direct to Lord Salisbury the scheme recently prepared here for a Convention regarding Egypt. The Draft corresponds with the one communicated to me by the Grand Vizir, i.e. a Convention for evacuation, but differing from the one submitted in London in April last year—and then withdrawn—in the following respect. This time the Porte has secured in advance French Government support in respect of the British right of re-entry, which before was the subject of a protest in Paris and St. Petersburg.

According to this it appears that the Sultan has renounced

[1] See p. 132.

his plan of seeking our assistance for an enquiry in London regarding some such scheme.

VIII. 176

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE,
August 3rd, 1891

Cipher telegram. Secret.

Lord Salisbury, who goes on leave to Dieppe next Saturday, intends to reply to-day in a friendly tone to the Turkish Ambassador's overtures regarding a Convention on evacuation, that he cannot make a declaration on so important a subject without an understanding with his colleagues. Some of these had already gone on leave, and all would soon be absent. So that it would be advisable to postpone further discussion of the matter until his, Lord Salisbury's, return in the month of October.

German Note.

On September 3rd, 1891, Kiamil Pacha [whose independent character was distasteful to Abdul Hamid] was dismissed from the post of Grand Vizir, and the Governor of Crete, Djevad Pacha, was appointed as his successor.

VIII. 176–7

BARON VON ROTENHAN, BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT,
September 15th, 1891

Telegram.

The Imperial Ambassador in Constantinople telegraphed yesterday as follows: The Sultan has now spoken personally and very confidentially to Sir William White and himself proposes a Convention designed as the first essential to safeguard his Sovereign rights; the rest of the points are 'details, which can be a matter of negotiation'. Sir William replied in a cautious, but friendly tone, and is preparing his report.

VIII. 177

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE,
September 19th, 1891

Cipher telegram. Very secret.

For Baron von Rotenhan.

My enquiry yesterday about the return of Baron von Holstein was called forth by the fact that I have important communications to make, which are perhaps not yet suitable for the Archives. I therefore make the urgency of the matter my excuse for begging you inform the Chancellor, as follows:

The Turkish Ambassador came up from the country to see me and to inform me very confidentially that over a fortnight ago a direct and secret communication from the Sultan came

to him respecting my latest conversations with him, Rustem Pacha, on the Egyptian affair. First the Sultan requires of him more information on the contents of the memorandum proposed by me before my departure.[1] . . .

German Note.

This memorandum of 53 pages, written in French, was sent to Rustem Pacha on October 13th to be forwarded to the Sultan. Its object was to persuade the Sultan to arrive at an agreement with England as soon as possible, and at any rate, before the next Elections in England. The agreement should include a declaration of the Sultan's suzerainty over Egypt together with the renunciation of a date for evacuation, and so, by settling the Egyptian question, pave the way for a nearer political understanding between England and Turkey. . . .

Rustem Pacha, who is sure to have reported by telegraph direct to his Master in this sense yesterday, implored me to believe that the change of Ministry in Constantinople implied no political change of direction in favour of France and Russia, and that the Sultan had no thought of throwing himself into the arms of these Powers. In proof of this he stated that efforts had been made lately to get a different Ambassador appointed in London, but that the Sultan had declared his fixed intention of retaining Rustem Pacha, in whose judgment he had full confidence.

From the Sultan's conversation about Egypt with Sir William White, reported in the telegram of September 15th, I gather the impression that Rustem Pacha's assurances to me may be relied on to a certain extent. Therefore, if my assumption is correct, it may be advisable not to ignore altogether the Sultan's desire, as explained to me by Rustem Pacha, and to establish by this means, at any rate, an assured and direct link between us and the Sultan. On the other hand, so long as we have only incomplete knowledge of how things are developing in Constantinople, we must certainly be most careful in any secret communication addressed through me to the Sultan.

Should the Chancellor share this opinion, I beg that a draft be forwarded to me with the least possible delay, containing the message I am to send to the Sultan through the Ambassador, as from myself *personally*—that is, if the Chancellor does not prefer me to suggest a draft to be sent to him by messenger for his approval.

CAPRIVI: '*His Majesty approves of Count Hatzfeldt's memorandum being sent to the Sultan in the way suggested.*'

German Note.

Hatzfeldt's memorandum, which took skilful account of the Sultan's

[1] Cf. p. 82 et. seq.

mentality, was accepted without hesitation in Berlin. Nevertheless, when it became known that the Sultan had made statements to the Austrian Ambassador, Baron Calice, according to which Abdul Hamid had played with the idea of allying himself by a definite written treaty either to the Triple or the Dual Alliance, a clause was added to the memorandum, aimed at turning the Sultan from this and inducing him to conclude a treaty with England, or eventually, one with England and Italy. As Hatzfeldt still expressed doubts, another paragraph was added to the memorandum with the object of combatting the conviction, which was present in the Sultan's mind, that he would meet with more compliance on the Egyptian question at the hands of a Liberal Government in England and would therefore do better to put off coming to an agreement with England.

In further pursuance of the same object the German Government continued to enquire in London and Vienna whether it would not be advisable to inform the Sultan of the Mediterranean Agreement of 1887 between England, Austria and Italy. This was left undone at the time, owing to objections raised by England and Italy. (Cf. Vol. I, p. 349.) Even now Lord Salisbury still held, as Count Hatzfeldt reported on October 28th, 1891, to the scruples expressed in 1887, but did not mean to reject altogether the idea of making the communication in the event of an Eastern Crisis actually taking place. Lord Salisbury did not regard seriously the chance of the Sultan assuming any binding engagement against the Franco-Russian Dual Alliance, as this would be inconsistent with his persistent habit of temporising. We have only Count Hatzfeldt's reports to tell us how the Sultan received Hatzfeldt's memorandum. But the course of events proves that its effect was not a lasting one. There is no need, therefore, to reproduce these reports.

VIII. 179

Count Hatzfeldt, in London, to Baron von Rotenhan, *September 24th*, 1891

I enclose the draft in question and beg you to obtain and communicate to me the Chancellor's feelings about it.

After close deliberation I was moved to apply this very detailed treatment to the question by the consideration that we are, whatever happens, at the mercy of the Sultan's discretion. Given that we are willing to run this risk, I humbly submit that this is our opportunity, which may never recur, for using every argument calculated to make the desired impression on the Sultan.

Rustem Pacha's communications make it clear that his Master, who before my departure showed but little inclination to establish secret relations by this method, is now impatient for the memorandum. It may therefore be advisable to strike while the iron is hot; so I beg you, if there is no essential objection to the enclosed draft, to indicate to me by telegraph any small alterations that appear desirable, so that the document may be despatched to its destination without further delay.

VIII. 180

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *October 20th*, 1891

Telegram. Secret.

To-day the Turkish Ambassador . . . again discussed Egypt with the Prime Minister. He said that his enquiry as to Lord Salisbury's views were for the present only of a private nature, and asked him whether he was now ready to begin a confidential exchange of ideas.

Previously in conversation with me Lord Salisbury showed little inclination to give his views on the possible conditions of an understanding with the Turkish Ambassador, since it was the Sultan's business to make the proposals. But he became convinced finally that greater compliance would now be properly justified. Rustem Pacha has just informed me that the Minister answered that the changed state of public opinion here will not allow him to admit the Wolff Convention any longer, and that the fixing of a date for evacuation must be left for later; on this condition, however, he is quite ready to enter into negotiations respecting Egypt and perhaps even to recognise the Sultan's rights over it.

Rustem Pacha is telegraphing in this sense to the Porte.

VIII. 181

German Note.

Count Hatzfeldt reported fully on October 22nd on the violent attacks made, in imitation of Gladstone's attitude at the meeting of the Liberal Party at Newcastle, by the Liberal Press against Lord Salisbury's Egyptian policy. There was reason to fear that the Liberal campaign might prejudice the Sultan's readiness to come to an understanding with England on the Egyptian question.

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *October 25th*, 1891

Telegram.

In answer to the above report.

It might have a telling effect, if Rustem Pacha would perhaps telegraph to the Sultan forthwith that Gladstone and his followers are demanding an *independent* Egypt, and, from the Turkish point of view, worse conditions than at present. He might perhaps first telegraph in advance the import of the letter.

IX. 73

MEMORANDUM BY COUNT HATZFELDT, *October 28th*, 1891

During my to-day's very confidential conversation with Lord Salisbury, relations with the Sultan since my return have

once again been discussed between us. Lord Salisbury does not believe there is any danger that the Sultan will reverse his persistent temporising policy by entering upon binding engagements against the Dual Alliance, as long as external circumstances do not compel him to do so. Nor does the Minister believe that the Russians are likely to strike a blow on the Bosphorus. He firmly believes that before this can happen, Russian influence must inevitably be made paramount in Bulgaria, entailing the expulsion of Prince Ferdinand from that country, and he does not think that Russia will expose herself to the risk of sending an expedition into the Bosphorus, which, if British ships passed through the Dardanelles at the same time, might be caught like a mouse in a trap.

I objected that according to all that I had heard him say on this subject, his whole Eastern policy was founded on the intrinsically uncertain condition of the British fleet being able to pass the Dardanelles in time. He did not deny this, but he remarked that the Sultan's notorious bad faith made it impossible either to count on an understanding with him, or, if one was arrived at, to trust to its being consistently and honestly carried out.

My reply to this expression of opinion, which I did not correct as far as the Sultan was concerned, was that the one chance, which he seemed to count upon, namely the unrestricted passage of the Dardanelles, might one day prove deceptive. His, Lord Salisbury's, words made it clear that he expected the appearance of a British fleet before the Dardanelles would induce any Turkish officer in command there to allow it through without question, if not by peaceful persuasion, then certainly by a show of force. I considered on the contrary that, since by his own former admission, the British ships would probably take 48 hours to reach the Dardanelles, it was questionable, to say the least, whether they would not by that time find a Russian in command with the needful military support, who would refuse passage and finally make it impossible. Lord Salisbury answered that this was possible, but hardly probable. If he had formerly told me that the voyage would take 48 hours, he had been thinking of the maximum distance. In practice it was different, for most of the British fleet was on the way and was in fact quite near the Dardanelles. Moreover, said Lord Salisbury emphatically, it was ordered to remain as close as possible to a telegraph wire. A Russian expedition in the Black Sea, steering for the Bosphorus, would require certain preparations, which could not escape observation, and it would therefore probably be quite possible to bring the British forces up to the Dardanelles in good time. Lord Salisbury went on

to remark with extreme personal confidence that the treatment of the Sultan would assume a very different form, if the British ships were anchored under his windows.

We returned to the discussion how far, if at all, the Sultan's good faith could be trusted in the event of a friendly understanding, and whether it would not be better for England, not merely to rely on a free passage through the Dardanelles, but come to some form of political rapprochement with the Sultan *before* the crisis arrived. Lord Salisbury asked me what I thought of it supposing it were possible. I answered as follows: My personal opinion, as frequently expressed to him in confidence, was that, if England wished to protect her interests in the East, a political understanding with the Sultan would be most desirable for her. There were two different possibilities, as far as I could judge. First of all I was thinking of the case often discussed between us, namely that the conclusion of an agreement would clear the stumbling-block out of the way for the Sultan and would bring about a rapprochement, which, if rightly handled, might lead to a further understanding regarding future possibilities. The contents of such an agreement would, I think, naturally be provided from the fact that he, Lord Salisbury, had always recognised the engagement to assist the Sultan under certain circumstances. The only link missing in the chain was therefore the assurance that the Sultan would ask for the assistance of England, stipulated by treaty, if the case arose.

Secondly, I could imagine the case of the Sultan's not merely abstaining from throwing himself into the arms of the Dual Alliance, but actually deciding to enter into definite engagements with the group, England-Austria-Italy, if only he could be induced to see that this combination possessed not only the power, but also the joint determination to deal in common with any crisis arising in the East, at the same time taking the Sultan's part. I again reminded Lord Salisbury of the time when, on the occasion of certain negotiations in London, I, together with Count Karolyi and Count Corti—behind the scenes of course—had taken part, in the idea of reassuring the Sultan on the score of future eventualities by communicating with him in strict confidence. Lord Salisbury's fears of indiscretions in Constantinople were the sole cause of its coming to nothing.[1] I said also that the onus of deciding this question, which would become ever more pressing as time went on, would probably rest on him alone, since it might be assumed that no difficulties would ever be raised in Vienna against accepting a suggestion from him. Lord Salisbury's answer was to the effect that

[1] Cf. Vol. I, 349 et seq.

he is still doubtful about making such a communication in Constantinople, but does not reject it altogether as a future possibility. He said: 'Yes, it will certainly be advisable, before the crisis arises.' All the same my impression is that he considers it advisable and to England's interest, not only to conclude a Convention about Egypt, but also to come to a political understanding with the Sultan, on the basis recommended by myself.

VIII. 181–2

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO RADOWITZ, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, *February 4th*, 1892

No. 28

In connection with the negotiations between England and Turkey, I beg you to address the Sultan as follows:—

The Sultan has consulted us on this matter. In accordance with our firm conviction we have advised him to come to an agreement with England regarding his rights in Egypt. It is his affair whether he is willing to follow our advice or not. Beyond our regard for the Sultan's welfare, his decision is of no interest to us. We merely wish to make it clear that the responsibility is not ours if his continued hesitation introduces a new situation, entailing disadvantages for Turkey.

Do not be drawn into a discussion of what this new situation may be, or what damages the Sultan may suffer.

VIII. 182

RADOWITZ, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *April 24th*, 1892

Ever since February the Sultan has allowed nothing more to be said to me on Egyptian affairs, and even during the latest events has never asked for our advice. Neither have I found an opportunity to mention the matter at the Porte.

Thus I have been unable so far to speak in accordance with your telegram No. 28 of April 17th [?].

The same to the same, June 22nd, 1892

As regards England, the Sultan is now in a state of expectancy. He seriously believes that a change of Government is imminent in England, and considers that it will enable him to resume the negotiations regarding Egypt on a more favourable basis.

[This change came to pass at the beginning of August, when Lord Salisbury's Cabinet was replaced by a Liberal one under Mr. Gladstone, with Lord Rosebery as Foreign Secretary.]

CHAPTER VII

ITALY AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

LORD SALISBURY AND THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE, APRIL TO AUGUST, 1891

[The despatches contained in this chapter are of great interest as showing the attempts made in connection with the renewal of the Triple Alliance in 1891, to bring about an even closer association of England with Italy than that which had been secured by the agreements of 1887. Suggestions were made that England should enter into an agreement for the maintenance of the *status quo* throughout the Mediterranean. Though Lord Salisbury desired the continuance of close friendship with Italy and thereby with the Triple Alliance, no definite agreement was arrived at. The future history of this matter will be found in Chapter XIII.]

German Note.

The so-called Mediterranean Agreements of March and December, 1887 (cf. Vol. I, p. 284 et seq.), contain no decisions on the questions of the Mediterranean in the narrower sense, but only on the Eastern Question. The trend of Italian policy was to insure her Mediterranean interests as far as was possible by suitable agreements. Her efforts in this direction were made clear during the negotiations for the renewal of the Triple Alliance. Although, to start with, Germany's leading statesmen strongly opposed this, she did in the Treaty of May 6th, 1891, signify her readiness to extend her private Treaty of February 20th, 1887 (Art. III), in the sense of insuring the Mediterranean interests of Italy. The new Article IX of the 1891 Treaty provided that under certain circumstances Germany and Italy would come to a similar agreement with England.

VIII. 43

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *March 26th*, 1891

Secret.

The Italian Ambassador [1] tells me in strict confidence that he has recently stated in a private letter to his Minister [2] that the existing secret Agreement with England is insufficient for the protection of Italian interests and fails to recognise the importance of Italy to British policy. He therefore suggests the advisability of demanding here and, in fact, through us as intermediaries, definite and more extensive engagements.

[1] Count Tornielli. [2] Marchese di Rudini.

VIII. 43

COUNT SOLMS-SONNENWALDE, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *April 12th*, 1891

Secret.

The attitude of England is evidently preoccupying Marquis Rudini. He wishes Germany and Austria to help him to induce England to make arrangements with Italy regarding the Mediterranean question, where it touches the East. Lord Salisbury is remarkably reserved about that question, and the Ambassador does not know how deeply Signor Crispi was engaged with the British Premier.

I remarked that Signor Crispi had frequently pressed Lord Salisbury too hard, especially about the port of Biserta, and had done himself little good by it. The Marquis answered that he did not attach much importance to that, for if the French wanted to found a harbour in Tunisian territory, where they were at home, they could hardly be prevented from doing so. It was quite enough to have put off the establishment of a naval base by certain representations. For him the one and only important point was to secure England's support for Italy, for Italy could not defend her coasts by herself, if she went to war with France.

Moreover, Lord Salisbury had shown such compliance over the negotiations on the delimitation of spheres of influence in Africa, that he hoped to come to an understanding with him over the most important question of all for Italy, that of coastal defence. He intended to discuss the matter with Lord Dufferin [1] as soon as the latter returned.

German Note.

Crispi had repeatedly informed Caprivi in November, 1890, that he was quite sure of England, also about Lord Salisbury's continuance in office.[2] He may have been over-confident. The correspondence between Salisbury and Crispi for 1887 and 1890 is given in J. Palamenghi Crispi's *Memoirs of F. Crispi*, pp. 194 and 464 (German Edition). This, on the contrary, shows that Salisbury was not really in agreement with the general assurances of the 1887 Agreement, and that he definitely refused to conclude a military Convention with Italy with a view to an imminent threat of war. (Cf. Despatch of June 5th, 1891.)

VIII. 44

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *April 18th*, 1891

Very Confidential.

Your Excellency may be assured that we not only welcome any Anglo-Italian rapprochement, but are ready to help in promoting it, as far as may seem possible.

[1] The British Ambassador in Rome. [2] Cf. p. 53.

According to the Italian Minister's confidential communication to Count Solms, he desires that we—and Austria also—may help him to put his personal relations with the Prime Minister on as friendly and confidential a footing as possible. Marquis Rudini's application to ourselves and Austria is evidently due to the fact mentioned at the end of the report from Rome and known, moreover, to yourself already, that the present Italian Ambassador in London is not the man to establish and strengthen mutual confidence.

We cannot decide here how far it is possible to induce Lord Salisbury to enter into further agreements with Italy on the Mediterranean questions. It is obvious that we should favour any agreement, going beyond the Anglo-Italian exchange of notes in 1887 and putting Point IV in particular in a more concise and binding form. I must leave it to your seasoned experience of conditions in England to decide whether you think a suggestion on the subject opportune at present, and I am confident that you will obtain from Lord Salisbury every concession that is obtainable. Your reports inform me that Lord Salisbury personally is ready, according to his conception of England's political interests, to come into touch as closely as is possible with Italy, even with regard to complications on the latter's coast, but that this readiness is restricted by the necessity of observing British public opinion. In view of the increasing development of the French Navy, it might be easier than it was formerly to justify before British public opinion an Anglo-Italian understanding regarding the defence of the coasts of Italy against the menace of hostile fleets. Even the great British public will see that the road to Egypt and India, which leads between Toulon and Biserta, can be easier defended on the Italian coast with Italy friendly to England, than against a French fleet with its bases in the harbours of an Italy anxious about her defenceless coasts, and therefore forced to follow the French lead, in spite of the fact that we protect her on the land side.

VIII. 45–6

Prince Henry VII of Reuss, in Vienna, to the Chancellor, Caprivi, *April 21st*, 1891

Secret.

Count Kalnoky informed me to-day in confidence that the Italian Government had approached him with the following request:

However important England's participation in the arrangements regarding the Eastern basin of the Mediterranean may be for Italy, and however great the guarantees to be gained by Italy

for her own interests, it would be of much greater value, if England would consent to similar engagements for the Western part of this Sea. Count Nigra said that Marquis Rudini was somewhat at a loss how to put these desires of his before the British Cabinet, and was coming to Count Kalnoky for assistance in the matter.

The Minister has assured the Ambassador that he is able fully to appreciate the desire of the Italian Government, and is quite prepared to use his good offices with Lord Salisbury, as soon as the latter has returned to London from his journey on the Continent. He cannot predict whether his démarche will be crowned with success, but there would certainly be more hope of it, if an identical step in support of the Austrian proposal were taken by Germany. He could merely advise the Italians to bring forward their requests in Berlin. If Count Hatzfeldt would act in concert with Count Deym,[1] the chances of success would be assured.

Count Kalnoky now desires to write Count Deym a private letter designed to be read aloud, not only setting forth Italy's wishes, but also explaining the advantages that England herself will gain by granting them. The Minister says—England cannot afford to see Italy destroyed by France and the command of the Mediterranean divided between England and France alone, Italy, a very useful factor for England, being put out of the way. Such a situation is not in the interests of Great Britain, and he hopes that Lord Salisbury may be inclined to meet this desire of the Italian Government in one form or another.

VIII. 46–7

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *May 18th*, 1891

Secret.

In reply to the despatch of April 18th.

In a very confidential conversation to-day on Marquis Rudini's wishes, Lord Salisbury said to me that I knew his personal views, but that I ought also to know that he could conclude no treaty. I remarked that it was not only a matter of a binding agreement, but that first and foremost also, he should encourage the present Italian Cabinet to stand by his policy; this might perhaps best be attained by an alteration in the wording of the notes exchanged in 1887. The Prime Minister showed no disinclination to consider this question, but he explained that sooner or later he would have to consult his colleagues, whose nervousness in such matters was known to me. Finally he agreed that I should shortly make proposals to him for an alteration of the wording, which he would then examine.

[1] Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in London.

I think it advisable not to neglect this opportunity for renewed discussion of the points in question and for taking advantage of the Prime Minister's present readiness. If Your Excellency agrees, I beg you to forward to me *as soon as possible* the text of the notes exchanged between England and Italy in 1887. They are not in the Embassy. It would be well to enquire at the same time the points on which Marquis Rudini especially desires alteration. Count Solms could probably supply the information.

Lord Salisbury has *no* wish for Count Tornielli's removal. This causes me to consider whether to conceal my further conversations with the Prime Minister from the Italian Ambassador, or to admit him into my confidence. I consider that the first is only possible, if at all, if Marquis Rudini agrees with it and himself communicates nothing to his Ambassador.[1]

[The Triple Alliance was renewed at this time, and was communicated to Lord Salisbury on May 20th.]

German Note.

According to a telegram from Marschall to Prince Reuss (May 19th, 1891) it was at Rudini's wish that the communication of it was made to Lord Salisbury. The records contain no support for the assertion of Julius von Eckardt in his anonymous *Berlin—Wien—Rom* (1892), p. 131, which he bases on Italian statements, to the effect that Lord Salisbury himself made his promise to protect the coast of Italy, when the need arose, absolutely contingent on the previous renewal of the Triple Alliance. The subsequent attitude of the British Government makes this hardly probable.

VIII. 48

Count Hatzfeldt, in London, to the German Foreign Office, *May 23rd*, 1891

Secret.

In our last conversation Lord Salisbury informed me that Rudini had demanded of him through Lord Dufferin the conclusion of a Treaty of Alliance. As I knew, consideration of Parliamentary conditions and his colleagues' nervousness prevented him from consenting to this. I remarked that in time and under given circumstances a treaty might seem indicated, and to him even desirable. Lord Salisbury did not at all deny this, but said that I knew the reasons why the present time was too early for it.

I went on to say that since our last conversation I had re-examined the text of the notes exchanged between England and Italy in 1887 and had received the impression that the reply returned by him to the Italian Government was very vague and non-committal. Lord Salisbury replied that his colleagues' ner-

[1] Cf. Sir S. Lee, *King Edward VII*, I, 536.

vousness at the time had made it impossible to obtain more. Finally I expressed my intention, with his approval, shortly to submit to him my alterations in the wording, and said that I considered it would be useful, if I were able by our next meeting to put forward Marquis Rudini's wishes in the matter.

Lord Salisbury, whom I shall not be able to see before next Tuesday or Wednesday, is going to keep secret from Count Tornielli our confidential discussions of this question until further notice.

VIII. 49

COUNT ZU SOLMS-SONNENWALDE, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *May 25th*, 1891

Secret.

I have communicated to Marquis Rudini, who is back from Milan, the contents of the telegram of May 18th, forwarded to me by Your Excellency, regarding the promotion of nearer relations between Italy and England. I did not state that Lord Salisbury does not wish for Count Tornielli's removal, but refrained from mentioning the personal question for the present.

My communication much pleased Marquis Rudini, and he said he would draft the desired alterations in the wording of the 1887 notes and then discuss the matter with me again.

The Prime Minister visited me to-day.

He said that he had gone rather further in his draft and now was bringing it to me for my opinion, and would only deliver it to me to transmit to Your Excellency, if it met with my approval.

As you will gather from the enclosed very confidential document, it contains the draft for an exchange of notes between the Three Allied Powers and England.

By Art. 2 England is to declare herself ready, in the event of Italy's being forced to take effective action in the threatened Mediterranean section, to move in concert with Germany in support of Italy's action. Arts. 4 and 5 seem to be at least doubtful.

Having heard the document read, I replied to Marquis Rudini that he had made known his wish that Germany and Austria should help him to induce England to come to arrangements with him regarding the Mediterranean questions in their relation to the East. His desire had been well received in Berlin and Vienna, and Count Kalnoky had mentioned Count Hatzfeldt as the individual best suited to negotiate on the matter with Lord Salisbury. It must be realised how much caution was needed in starting negotiations with the British Premier. Count Hatzfeldt had received the necessary instructions and had prepared the report, which I had communicated to him (the Marquis). I then repeated

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to him again the contents of the telegram referred to at the beginning of this despatch, and added that it was in consequence of this that I had requested him to hand me his proposals for the alterations to the notes of 1887, for use by Count Hatzfeldt in his further negotiations with Lord Salisbury.

He asked me for my personal views, so I permitted myself to observe to him that the scheme which he had prepared seemed to me to be rather the basis for a Quadruple alliance and that it would lead to a time-wasting exchange of views between Berlin, Vienna and Rome, in order to agree on the proposals to be made to Lord Salisbury. Considering Lord Salisbury's extreme reluctance to enter into arrangements of this kind at all, and that his only reason for consenting to consider the proposal to alter the 1887 notes was to make it easier for the Italian Government to cling to its policy, and that he would eventually have to consult his nervous colleagues, and finally as he had agreed that Count Hatzfeldt should make proposals regarding the alterations for his approval, I considered it extremely rash and fraught with no certainty of success to come forward so soon with demands of so far-reaching a nature.

Marquis Rudini answered that he could see that certain of the proposals dotted the i's too thoroughly. His idea had been that one might at least make the attempt to draw England definitely into the Triple Alliance. It was the information from His Majesty, that Signor Crispi had in his hands a private letter from Lord Salisbury, showing that the latter had entered into far-reaching engagements with Italy, that had decided him to take this step.[1] Signor Crispi, however, had said nothing to him about this letter and had kept it to himself.

I persuaded the Minister to give up his suggestion that I should telegraph to Your Excellency in Berlin to ask whether you would agree with the proposals for an exchange of notes between the four Powers, stating the *casus foederis* for England, as contained in Clauses 4 and 5, for the reason that in Berlin they could not form a judgment until they had the whole scheme in front of them.

Finally the Minister agreed with the justice of my scruples and said that he would at once prepare a draft for the alterations in the 1887 notes and discuss it with me again.

In order not to offend the Minister, I promised to submit to Your Excellency his draft for the exchange of notes between the three Allied Powers and England.

On the same occasion I told the Minister it would be most practical to leave the negotiations with Lord Salisbury to Count Hatzfeldt alone, and only when a result had been obtained, to

[1] See note, p. 95.

conclude the matter officially through the Ambassador. Marquis Rudini repeated that he did not believe Lord Salisbury really liked Count Tornielli. I intend to tell the Minister later that his remark is not quite justified. Finally he said again that he would do nothing in the matter without the full consent of Your Excellency.

In the evening I returned to Signor Malvano in person the scheme for the exchange of notes, having first taken a copy of it, and seeing that it had been prepared by him, I repeated to him in what respects I was doubtful of it. I added that the thing now was to get all we could at the moment.

Enclosure.

Projet de notes que chacun des Ministres des Affaires Etrangères remettrait aux Ambassadeurs respectifs des trois autres Puissances.

Les notes échangées à Londres le 12 février at à Vienne le 16 décembre 1887 entre l'Italie, l'Angleterre et l'Autriche-Hongrie règlant d'une manière pratique l'attitude et la ligne de conduite que ces trois Puissances ont adoptée pour le présent ainsi que pour les éventualités de l'avenir, au sujet des questions se rattachant à la situation de l'Empire Ottoman.

Les Cabinets de Rome, de Berlin et de Vienne, ayant à l'occasion du récent renouvellement de leur traité d'alliance appelé l'attention particulière du Cabinet de Londres sur l'avantage qu'offrirait, pour la cause de la paix européenne, l'adhésion de l'Angleterre aux principes que les trois alliés ont pris pour base de leurs arrangements mutuels, soit en vue de leur securité, soit en vue de l'équilibre dans le bassin central et occidental de la Méditerranée, il s'en est suivi entre les quatre Cabinets un échange confidentiel d'idées, par l'effet duquel ceux-ci ont arrêté les points suivants qui complètent et précisent les énonciations contenues dans les notes échangées le 12 février et le 24 mars 1887 entre l'Italie, l'Angleterre et l'Autriche-Hongrie.

1. Maintien par les efforts combinés des quatre Puissances du status quo territorial dans les régions nord-africaines sur la Méditerranée : à savoir la Cyrénaïque, la Tripolitaine, la Tunisie et le Maroc. Le Représentants des quatre Puissances dans ces régions auront pour instruction de se tenir dans la plus étroite intimité de communications et assistance mutuelles.

2. Si, le maintien du status quo devenant malheureusement impossible, l'Italie devait entreprendre dans les régions susénoncées, en vue d'un intérêt d'équilibre et de légitime compensation, son action effective dans la forme d'occupation ou autre prise de garantie, l'Angleterre se déclare dès maintenant prête à s'associer à l'Allemagne après accord formel et préalable, pour appuyer l'action de l'Italie dans le sens ci-dessus indiqué.

3. Les trois Puissances alliées appuieront en toute occasion l'œuvre de l'Angleterre en Égypte.

4. Si la France faisait acte d'étendre son occupation ou bien son protectorat ou sa souveraineté, sous une forme quelconque, sur les territoires nord-africaines, ou si elle voulait troubler l'œuvre de l'Angleterre en Égypte, la tentative de la France serait par l'Allemagne, l'Italie et l'Angleterre considérée comme portant atteinte à leurs intérêts communs. Si l'une d'elles prenait, en pareil cas, l'initiative d'une action militaire, les deux autres, après accord formel et préalable, appuieraient militairement cette action.

5. Les quatre Puissances s'échangent dès maintenant, et sauf accord préalable et formel en temps opportun, une déclaration analogue pour le cas où l'aggression de la France se produirait en Europe contre l'une d'elles.

Le soussigné Ministre des Affaires Etrangères (ou autre titre) de . . . adresse la présente note à l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté le . . . en constatant que les cinq points ci-dessus énumerés constituent pour la conduite et attitudes éventuelles de son propre gouvernement une règle indéclinable.

VIII. 53

COUNT ZU SOLMS-SONNENWALDE, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *May 27th*, 1891

Secret.

Marquis Rudini has withdrawn the draft proposal enclosed with my despatch of May 25th [for an exchange of notes between the three Allied Powers and Lord Salisbury respecting the promotion of closer relations between England and Italy], and has to-day handed me a fresh draft for an exchange of notes between himself and Lord Salisbury alone. This I beg to enclose for Your Excellency. The fresh draft defines and extends the points contained in the 1887 notes and avoids the abrupt tone of the one handed to me the day before yesterday.

Marquis Rudini commissions me to beg Your Excellency to be so good as to forward the draft note to the Imperial Ambassador, Count Hatzfeldt, for his negotiation with Lord Salisbury. The Premier will not inform Count Tornielli of the matter, until after Count Hatzfeldt's efforts have produced a result and the way is open for official action. But Marquis Rudini will, no the other hand, inform Count Launay of it in strict confidence. Count Launay is not in touch with Count Tornielli.

Marquis Rudini would like to make the final exchange of notes with Lord Dufferin, but fears that the latter may have already gone on leave, when the time comes.

He thinks it very desirable to bring about, if possible, after the conclusion of the Agreement with Lord Salisbury, a meeting

between the King and Her Majesty, the Queen of England or the Prince of Wales, in order to make known publicly the closer relationship between England and Italy. The Marquis considers that this would tend to increase the popularity of the Triple Alliance with the Italian people.

[The emended proposal for an exchange of notes contained all the points of the former one, which was withdrawn. But for 'les trois Puissances' there was substituted 'l'Italie', and the whole now became a Treaty of mutual guarantee between England and Italy against any change in the Mediterranean for the support of England in Egypt, and against any form of aggression or interference by France.]

VIII. 55

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *May 30th*, 1891

I beg to enclose two reports by Count Solms together with two copies of a draft for an Anglo-Italian understanding. I also request you to discuss them with Lord Salisbury by the method that appears to you most suitable.

We shall be interested to hear whether Lord Salisbury's opposition to Count Tornielli's removal is inspired by his wish to avoid observation, or because he has lately begun to place confidence in the Italian Ambassador.

VIII. 56

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *June 3rd*, 1891

During yesterday's Debate in the House Mr. Labouchere questioned the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with reference to a speech by the Italian Deputy, Chiala, delivered in the Italian Chamber on May 14th, in favour of renewing the Triple Alliance [for 5 years].[1] Signor Chiala had reminded the Chamber that in 1887 special undertakings had been entered into between Italy and England for the protection of Italian interests, which were admittedly identical with those of England. This Agreement had been of such importance, that Signor Depretis[2] had declared in the Council of Ministers that no Ministry could ever have hoped to obtain what Count Robilant had then obtained. Signor Depretis added that Italy's position was now secure on land and sea, and that as long as the close relationship of Italy and England with the Central Powers existed, France could not easily attempt a war of conquest, even if she could count on Russia. Mr. Labouchere wished to know whether Signor Chiala's statements regarding the Anglo-Italian Agreement of 1887 were founded on fact and whether it was really of such a character as

[1] Cf. Hansard, Vol. 353, p. 1465.

[2] Count Robilant's successor at the Foreign Ministry.

to justify the conclusions which Signor Chiala drew from it; also, whether, if this were the case, the Government would supply the House with full information on the promises given to Italy in 1887.

Sir James Fergusson, Under-Secretary of State, replied that the questions put by Mr. Labouchere in 1888 in connection with a motion on the Address and in July, 1889, had already been fully dealt with, and that the Government had nothing to add to the declarations made at that time, seeing that the political situation had not altered in the meantime.[1]

Mr. Labouchere then asked whether Her Majesty's Government desired to indicate that Signor Chiala's statement was entirely without foundation. Sir James Fergusson denied this and again referred Mr. Labouchere to the former debates in the House.

VIII. 57

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *June 5th*, 1891

During yesterday's Debate in the House of Commons Mr. Labouchere asked a question of Sir James Fergusson regarding the publication of all correspondence which had passed between the British and Italian Governments on the subject of the Triple Alliance since 1887. Sir James replied that it was impossible to publish a correspondence between Her Majesty's Government and foreign countries, referring to a period when the European situation had been somewhat critical, without depriving England of an influence beneficial to the cause of maintaining peace. At this juncture he must repeat that Her Majesty's Government had taken on itself no sort of engagement, binding either the Navy or the Army to any other Power. The Government had reserved to itself full freedom of decision and action under every conceivable circumstance. Italian statesmen knew perfectly well that Her Majesty's Government was at one with them in maintaining the *status quo* in the Mediterranean Sea and also in adjacent waters, and that England's sympathies would be on the side of that Power which would maintain the existing conditions, so vital to British interests.

VIII. 57–8

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *June 6th*, 1891

Cipher telegram. Secret.

In our last confidential conversation Lord Salisbury showed the same political sympathy for Italy, but he still wishes to

[1] Cf. Hansard, Vol. 322, p. 1182; also Vol. I, p. 361.

examine my latest proposals for the draft Notes and to discuss them with me. But the nervousness of his colleagues is even more acute than before owing to the recent questions in the House of Commons, and he requests me therefore to wait a little longer still.

I have assented to his wishes in order to avoid opposition and suspicion by any pressure on my part, but in about a fortnight, or as soon as I consider that the impression made by these questions has passed off, I mean to re-open the subject. One highly confidential utterance of the Prime Minister's was very remarkable ; he did not consider certain comments in the French Press on a communication to Prince Napoleon attributed to the King of Italy to be unfounded, and ascribed it to the King's desire at that time to frighten France off any scheme of aggression against Italy.

German Note.

The *Figaro* of June 3rd, 1891, had published a letter from the French Deputy, Millevoye, to Mr. Labouchere, under the title of *Quadruple Alliance*, with the idea of furnishing the latter with fresh material for his indiscreet questions in Parliament. The letter repeated certain statements alleged to have been made some time earlier by King Humbert of Italy to Prince Jérome Napoleon (who died in March, 1891) on the nature of the Anglo-Italian engagements. The King is represented to have said : ' Je n'ai rien à craindre pour la sécurité des côtes italiennes. J'ai du Cabinet de St. James la promesse formelle que la flotte anglaise se joindra à la mienne, le cas échéant, pour couvrir l'Italie contre toute opération maritime.' And again : ' Je n'ai pas à vous en dire davantage. Ce que je puis vous affirmer, c'est que les Gouvernements anglais et italien ont échangé des dépêches qui contiennent des engagements précis ; et j'ai pleine confiance dans la parole écrite du gouvernement anglais.'

VIII. 58

COUNT MÜNSTER, IN PARIS, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *June 7th*, 1891

Cipher telegram.

M. Ribot has spoken to the Italian Ambassador of Prince Bonaparte's revelations, and says that he has received information of something of the sort before and believes it. Menabrea replied that he had no idea whether the indiscreet revelations quoted the King's words correctly, or whether there were any arrangements in writing ; that, however, did not matter, for if France tried to disturb the balance in the Mediterranean, the British and Italian fleets would be found on the same side even if no such arrangements existed.

This vigorous reply greatly annoyed M. Ribot.

German Note.

The despatch which follows refers to a long article in the *Standard* of June 4th on Anglo-Italian relations, the pretext for the article being

the Millevoye revelations. It was on the lines that binding engagements certainly did not exist, but that the natural instinct for self-preservation must and would attract England to the side of Italy, if the latter were attacked by France. The article openly referred to the Triple Alliance as equivalent to a peace Alliance. 'The Triple Alliance, it cannot be too often repeated, is a defensive compact, and a defensive compact only.'[1] The Emperor William II marked the article with 'very good' and 'bravo!' The Foreign Office thought it sufficiently important to enquire of Count Hatzfeldt (June 6th) what opinions he found in the rest of the Press. He replied that it had found no great echo elsewhere.

VIII. 59

Count Hatzfeldt, in London, to the Chancellor, Caprivi, *June 8th*, 1891

Secret.

Our conversation turned on the opinion which seems now to be taking root in St. Petersburg, that Russia does not need a formal Alliance with France and might now reject any overtures in that direction, because it is certain that France would anyhow give military support to Russia, if the need arose. We went on to mention the *Standard* article, according to which it is no longer a question of the relations between France and Russia. Lord Salisbury remarked that the situation between England and Italy was a perfectly analogous one, for Italy could count on England's support under certain given circumstances, even without previous agreement.

Then followed, without any initiative on my part, a short discussion of the question how far, if at all, under these circumstances Lord Salisbury could go in meeting Italy's request by means of some new exchange of notes, to express more definitely the intentions of his policy regarding Italy. I confined myself to the remark that since we last mentioned the question, I had thought much about it and should soon be in a position to impart my ideas to him, if he desired it. His words indicated that, if a fresh text were prepared, he would be obliged to observe certain reservations, so as to guard against the possible reproach later of having undertaken engagements for England too definite and comprehensive, and also against the possibility that the engagements undertaken here might encourage Italy to provoke lightheartedly a conflict with her neighbours; the British Government would have its hands bound by these engagements and be drawn blindly into the fray.

In this connection I should like to remark that the second draft sent to me contains certain provisions, which, if accepted here, will undoubtedly expose the British Government to this

[1] English in text.

danger, and I am therefore convinced that they will scarcely find favour here. As there is yet time, owing to the present postponement of the whole question, I shall not fail very soon to return to the question in further detail and to point out more exactly those points in the Italian draft which must in my opinion be modified, before I can frame a suitable proposal here. I hope thus to avoid an unfavourable impression, which might prejudice the whole affair.

At the close of the conversation Lord Salisbury begged me to hold up the whole matter for a little, for the reasons known to Your Excellency, and I think that I may count on your consent to my readiness to grant this desire. As things are now, it would only have made Lord Salisbury suspicious, if I had brought pressure just at this moment or merely insisted on an immediate discussion of the special questions. Moreover, I have no doubt that his words about the increased nervousness of his colleagues are founded on fact, so that any pressure on my part just now would be unsuccessful. But my continuous friendly relations with him should make it easy for me to form a clear opinion, when once the impression caused by the Labouchere questions has cleared away, and the right moment has come for resuming negotiations. I shall not fail to take full advantage of this.

VIII. 61

PRINCE HENRY VII OF REUSS, IN VIENNA, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *June 10th*, 1891

Secret.

Sir James Fergusson's statements in the House of Commons in answer to Mr. Labouchere's questions on England's Italian policy have greatly pleased Count Kalnoky, who intends to speak to Sir A. R. Paget, the British Ambassador here, and also directly to Lord Salisbury in London.

Your Excellency knows that after the successful renewal of our treaties, Marquis Rudini was still anxious because he wished to get the gaps in it filled up by England. So he repeatedly asked Count Kalnoky to attempt to induce the British Premier to make a declaration, setting forth England's interest in the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean in the most binding form possible.

Count Kalnoky was not disinclined to take the step. He had no doubts as to Lord Salisbury's sentiments, but he was not sure if the Premier would be able to satisfy the Italian Minister completely.

This defect is, in Count Kalnoky's opinion, now entirely removed by Sir James Fergusson's statements. That which at

best could have been said by Lord Salisbury only *in camera caritatis* has now been publicly declared. It has caused the Mediterranean policy, which is contemplated by the Conservative Cabinet, to receive up to a certain extent the sanction of Parliament, and this policy will therefore survive Lord Salisbury. It has also greatly tranquillised and reassured the Italians as to the future ; whilst on the other hand, the French now know for certain what they can, or rather what they cannot reckon upon, if it ever occurs to them to disturb the *status quo* in the Mediterranean (the limits of which Fergusson has not defined).

Count Kalnoky thinks it natural that Paris must be annoyed by this certainty, as Count Münster also reports ; [1] but he considers it much more conducive to peace that it should be understood in Paris, than that they should preserve illusions as to England's attitude.

My French colleague [2] whom I met yesterday in the Minister's anteroom, mentioned it to me, and I permitted myself to express the foregoing opinion as my own view. He showed just as much annoyance as his Chief, Ribot, showed to Signor Menabrea. But he finally admitted to me that it is better policy for all parties to see clearly than to grope in the dark.

M. Decrais also confided to me that he was convinced that Millevoye's revelations had truth behind them. He knew King Humbert well and was glad to recognise his splendid qualities. But His Majesty was '*un peu Gascon et hâbleur*' and often said things, which he, Decrais, knew from experience would have been better kept to himself. It was not at all surprising that he had boasted to Prince Napoleon of the British assistance, however improbable it might appear.

[1] Cf. telegram of June 7th. [2] Decrais.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ARMENIAN QUESTION

German Note.

The question of Armenia was one of old standing. The Cyprus Convention between England and Turkey (June 4th, 1878) and the Treaty of Berlin (July 13th, 1878) caused it to enter a new phase, in as much as the Porte had by these Treaties bound itself, both with England alone and with the Signatory Powers at the Congress of Berlin, to execute reforms which were to improve the lot of the Christian subjects of Turkey, and of the Armenians in particular, and to protect them from the violence of their Mohamedan enemies. By Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin the Signatory Powers clearly asserted their right to watch over the fulfilment of the measures taken by the Sultan with this end in view.

On the strength of these decisions England had repeatedly raised the question of Armenia with the Porte (in June, 1880, autumn, 1881, May, 1883, and August, 1886) with ever-growing vehemence, for public opinion in England was violently irritated by it.

[The rest of the Powers, who had signed the Treaty of Berlin, almost immediately dropped all interest in the fate of Armenia. Bismarck was quite explicit on the subject. (See Vol. I. 153.) The result was that the Sultan realised that he could safely disregard the British protests.] The only result was that Anglo-Turkish relations, which had suffered through the Egyptian affair, became still worse. After 1890 the condition of the Armenians became again so bad that fresh intervention by the Powers, not by England alone, became inevitable.

IX. 189

Radowitz, in Constantinople, to the Chancellor, Caprivi, *August 1st*, 1890

Confidential.

Before the holidays I was able, mainly on the strength of my British colleague's impressions and statements, in my report on Armenian affairs, to say that these had not become worse than formerly, and though not exactly satisfactory, they could be described as much less bad, at any rate, than the foreign Armenian Committees, especially the London one, would have them. The latter is exploiting the Armenian agitation mainly in the personal interests of the sympathisers resident in London. Sir W. White was in consequence constantly trying to deter the British Government from official intervention here, which, as is known, has merely set the Sultan more against the Armenians and made him

more suspicious of England. He hoped that conditions in the Armenian provinces of Turkey would gradually improve under the administration of intelligent Walis, and that the Sultan's extraordinary personal anxiety at the dangers threatening him from the side of Armenia will become less, when he is no longer worried with outside suggestions regarding Armenia.

These hopes have, in the time that has since elapsed, not been realised. The management here of the trial of the Kurdish Chief Moussa Bey had already proved how little can be effected, when it comes to the point, against the men who are successfully turning the deep-rooted prejudices of the Sultan to their own advantage. Even after the removal of the Minister of Justice, Djevdet Pacha, from whom refusal of all justice to Christians originated, there has been no change in the proceedings against Moussa Bey. The measures with regard to the robber, which were solemnly promised to the British Ambassador, have not yet been taken. Rather is there a petty and unjust treatment of all Armenians, as being suspected of conspiracy against the Sultan and the Empire, which is being nourished by extensive spy-work, and has led to terrible events, such as recently at Erzerum. The reports from the British Consul at Erzerum describe, so Sir W. White tells me, a general and deliberate system of persecution against a whole nation, carried out by the most objectionable means. The Armenian Patriarch here,[1] whose reputation is that of a peaceful, sensible man, and who is therefore treated as an enemy by the agitators in the foreign Armenian Committees, recently addressed a full Memorandum to the Sultan's chief Private Secretary, setting forth the grievances of his great diocese, and hoping by this means to bring the facts directly before the Sultan, without passing through other hands. I beg to enclose a copy of this document translated into French [not given]. It begins by describing recent events at Erzerum and the position of the Armenians with regard to the Porte and puts together the main grievances of which the Patriarchate has most recently had to complain. The tone of perfect loyalty and submission in this document is remarkable. . . .

German Note.

An uproar took place during service in the Armenian Cathedral. A crowd pursued the fleeing Patriarch into a neighbouring building and attacked him. There was a bloody fight; a Police Officer was killed, and several people were wounded on both sides.

This discord amongst the Armenians came to the surface in the tumult at the Patriarchate on July 27th. The peaceful Patriarch very nearly fell a sacrifice, and for the first time it was

[1] Choran Achikian.

proved that an Armenian revolt might take place even in the Capital. The incitements to revolt committed by the foreign Armenian connections have finally achieved their object here. Its first result is merely the undoing of the large Armenian population in Constantinople and its neighbourhood, the great majority of whom took no part. Already a harsher and more ruthless police persecution has begun against them.

I have received reliable information that the Sultan is more and more disturbed by the realisation that the bogy of an Armenian menace, which he has always feared, has now come so near him. He will think of nothing at first but how to guard against this imagined threat against his person. The crowd of palace intriguers, spies and informers flourishes; sensible and honest advisers will now have to be more circumspect than ever.

I have not yet been able to speak to the Grand Vizir of the affair, which, now that Bairam is over, must be included in future official dealings of the Porte.

IX. 191

RADOWITZ, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *August 3rd*, 1890

In reference to my report of August 1st, regarding the Armenian grievances, I beg to add the following account of the attitude in this question adopted by the foreign representatives.

I can only speak now of that of the Russian [1] and British Ambassadors, as none of the other representatives here have shown any interest in Armenian affairs.

The Russian Ambassador took no special steps with the Porte on the question before his departure, but he has left behind a feeling that something of the kind may be expected from Russia in the near future.

The British Ambassador is still so far very reserved on the question. Sir William White does not deny that the increasing acuteness of the Armenian business, brought on by Turkey's bad policy, is most unwelcome and disagreeable to his Government, but he continues to warn them in London against isolated action. Sir William's theory, with which, he tells me confidentially, Lord Salisbury agrees, is that the right, promised to England, concerning the control of the Armenian reforms, under Art. I of the Cyprus Convention of June 4th, 1878,[2] and later under Art. LXI

[1] A. Nelidoff.

[2] 'In return, H.I.M. the Sultan promises to England to introduce necessary reforms, to be agreed upon later between the two Powers, into the government and for the protection of the Christians and other subjects of the Porte in these territories. . . .'

of the Treaty of Berlin, 1878,[1] was conveyed to all the Signatory Powers, and that England was not bound to go on with it, so long as the others failed to do the same.[2]

He admits, however, that Parliamentary considerations might nevertheless make it necessary for England to take some initiative, and he thinks that in London they cannot certainly remain indifferent when once Russia takes action, but must eventually share in any steps that are taken here.

So it appears that the two Powers most interested in the matter are not quite clear as to the attitude to be adopted, and are each waiting to see what the other side does.

IX. 193

Count Pourtalès, Chargé d'Affaires in St. Petersburg, to the Chancellor, Caprivi, *September 15th*, 1890

Extract.

M. de Giers continued,—even though Russia could not be indifferent about the situation, she was very far from wishing to 'soulever la question Arménienne'. It was certainly right that the clauses in the Treaty of Berlin affecting Armenia should be strictly carried out, but this did not interest Russia, who would assuredly therefore do nothing to hasten it. The thirst after a further advance into Asia Minor, of which the British accused the Russians, was far from their thoughts. 'We were obliged to take Kars,' said the Minister, 'because of its importance as a strategic point, and Batum is useful to us commercially. For the rest, it is no business of ours to increase our Armenian and Musulman population there.'

Later in the conversation M. de Giers explained that any political interest there was in the Armenian question was England's alone, and that was why she took it up so warmly. The British wished to see an independent Principality of Armenia created on the Russian border, destined to serve, like Bulgaria, as a bulwark against the advance of the dreaded Russian influence towards the Mediterranean. But Russia had no reason to wish for a second Bulgaria, for an autonomous Armenian Principality would bring the added danger for Russia of awakening in the Russian Armenians a desire to join up with this Principality.

[1] 'La Sublime Porte s'engage à réaliser, sans plus de retard, les améliorations et les réformes qu'exigent les besoins locaux dans les provinces habitées par les Arméniens et à garantir leur sécurité contre les Circassiens et les Kurdes. Elle donnera connaissance périodiquement des mesures prises à cet effet aux Puissances qui en surveilleront l'exécution.'

[2] Cf. Vol. I, p. 100.

IX. 194

RADOWITZ, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *September 28th*, 1890

With regard to Armenia, attempts are being made, by England on one side and by Russia on the other, to make the Sultan suspicious of the designs of the other party. The Russians are strengthening him in the assumption that England is supporting the supposed desire of the Armenians for political autonomy. I gather from the report from St. Petersburg of September 15th, which you have sent to me, that this is M. de Giers' expressed opinion. The British are warning the Palace against Russian machinations in the Armenian Provinces of Turkey and assert that agents from Russian Armenia have been concerned in all the recent outbreaks of Armenian dissatisfaction, and that their object is to secure Russian intervention, for which everything is already prepared, in the Armenian border districts.

The Sultan trusts neither British nor Russians, and the result is that he fears all the more the political dangers threatening him from Armenia and is little inclined for serious measures to improve the administration of state and justice, which is really the only point there. The Armenian population, in whom the British and Russians are taking such interest, are still as badly off as ever.

Sir William White tells me that in Armenia itself there is scarcely any movement for autonomy, and that it is merely a cry raised by the Committees that are busy abroad, and especially in London. It finds support in Mr. Gladstone, but not at all in the present Government. He is trying to make this understood at Yildiz all the time. Just lately he received a visit from Mr. William Summers, a Liberal Member of Parliament, who was here for a short time, and who is agitating for the 'Armenian Question' in England. Mr. Summers told somebody here that his and Gladstone's sole object in taking up Armenia was to make difficulties for Salisbury's Ministry.

IX. 195

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT POURTALÈS, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES IN ST. PETERSBURG, *October 6th*, 1890

From a source, which has hitherto proved itself to be well informed, I learn of the attitude lately observed by the Russian Government on the Armenian question. Attention is called to the especial friendliness of the St. Petersburg Cabinet towards the Turkish Ambassador, Husni Pacha, in offering him the most reassuring promises as to its feelings in the matter. M. de Giers' conversation with the Ambassador must have left the latter under the impression that the Russian Government fully appreciates

the difficulties which have delayed the fulfilment of the promised reforms in Armenia. The tone of the *Novoye Vremia* is in tune with the official Russian attitude and that paper is now advising the Armenians not to make the already complicated situation still worse and to wait first for the Porte's efforts at reform. Husni Pacha ought to be highly pleased with this attitude and will have made his Report to Constantinople in this sense.

If this information is correct,—and I have no reason to doubt it—it must mean that Russia intends to try and turn to her own advantage the feeling produced on the Sultan by the recent British pressure, brought for domestic political reasons, on him to carry out the reforms. She must hope thus to restore her influence in Constantinople, which lately has been on the decline. There is perhaps the further intention also to induce Turkey to temporise still longer on this burning question, and so to demonstrate to the Armenians that they have nothing to hope for from this quarter. There is evidence from various sources that considerable bodies of Russian troops have been massed on the Armenian border for some time, and Russian policy is thus enabled to avail itself, for its own ends, of any risings occurring in the border territory.

My sources of information indicate that the affair is a matter of varying interest in diplomatic circles in St. Petersburg. I communicate it therefore to you for your personal information with the earnest request to report here whatever comes to you concerning the affair.

German Note.

As a result of Russia's Turkophil attitude, the British Government ceased for a space from energetic action in the Armenian question. In spite of repeated references to the question in the House of Commons from 1890 onwards the Salisbury Cabinet saw no reason to depart from its reserve. On the contrary, Sir James Fergusson, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, on March 16th, 1891, according to a report by Count Metternich, Secretary of Embassy, defended the Sultan and the Porte warmly, as welcoming the British Government's advice on Armenian matters and as doing their best to improve conditions. The official British attitude did not alter until August, 1892, when the Liberal Party, with Gladstone and Lord Rosebery at the helm, came into power. According to repeated statements by Count Hatzfeldt, the Foreign Minister, Lord Rosebery, took little interest in the Armenian question, and he tried at first to carry on with Lord Salisbury's policy. But after the spring of 1893, when Armenian affairs came more under discussion and found an ever stronger echo among the British public, he was obliged to take account of the pro-Armenian sentiments of the Liberal Party.

CHAPTER IX

THE TUNIS–TRIPOLIS QUESTION, 1890–91

German Note.

The following document was inspired by various reports of Italian complaints regarding the alleged intention of France to establish a large harbour for war-ships at Biserta on the Tunis coast. Italy entered an official remonstrance in Berlin on May 21st, 1890.

VIII. 237

MEMORANDUM BY THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *May 15th*, 1890

I consider that it does not interest us directly who is master of the Western Mediterranean, although our colonial policy causes us to set more store on keeping the shortest route to East Africa and Polynesia open. If war broke out, there might be a fight for the Suez Canal, without formally impairing its neutrality. One or two ships filled with cement and sunk at the right moment in the Canal could close it for a long time, a course which a weaker Power could also adopt. Apart from this the stronger Power on the sea could so control both the Northern and Southern ends of the Canal, as to prevent enemy war-ships and trading ships from using it. In such a case we could never be the stronger.

I think that the establishment of the French at Biserta touches the British more nearly than the Italians, for it implies an intention to threaten the passage through the Canal—a threat unpleasant for the Italians after Massowah,[1] but quite intolerable for the British. The claim to control the sea is untenable, from the moment that England's hold on the Canal can be impaired in war-time. The line of coaling-stations from Gibraltar to Hong Kong, into which millions have been poured, loses its value. It is easier to blockade Port Said from Biserta than from Toulon, because the blockading ships have a shorter way to return for coaling, repairs, etc. Years must pass before Biserta becomes of any use for this object. If France has such intentions, she must, moreover, strengthen her fleet all round, or else remove a considerable part of it from Cherbourg or Brest. Either will suit us. In the first case she drains her fighting strength, and in the second we obtain a freer hand in our own sea and the Canal. If the

[1] The Italian campaign in Abyssinia.

British do not bring in conscription,—and they will not do that until after a defeat—they can build plenty more ships, but cannot man them. They are threatened at Malta, made helpless before Constantinople and would have an urgent interest in tightening their Italian alliance, if only on account of Biserta. For it would be some time before the Italians could be as uncomfortable neighbours to them, if in control of Biserta, as the French. We can only approve of the development of Biserta, as it binds Italy to the Triple Alliance, so long as we maintain England's connection with it. I should think it might help us, if we could assure Italy in regard to this, and display to England her weak side—insufficient forces on land and sea and complete lack of the ability to launch a sudden military operation or to carry out her obligations. The surest way to prevent Italy from falling into the arms of France lies in nourishing her aspirations in North Africa. Massowah makes her still more sensitive about Biserta ; it weakens the Italians in war, but it keeps them on our side, and yet they will never risk all their forces for us.

VIII. 238

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *May 24th*, 1890

I send you a copy of an Italian Note, which expresses the Italian Government's anxiety at the great progress recently made on the harbour works at Biserta and desires that we should once again bring pressure in Paris in the sense of the despatch addressed to Count Leyden [1] on January 1st, 1889.

German Note.

This despatch proposed joint Anglo-German action in Paris regarding Biserta.

You replied to that despatch on January 16th that Lord Salisbury was against joint diplomatic action, which he feared would produce more irritation, but that Lord Lytton [2] had been instructed to make representations casually to M. Goblet. What success, if any, these representations may have had, we have never been informed.

On the other hand, Count Münster, in obedience to a despatch sent to him on January 1st also, declared to M. Goblet that the enlargement and fortification of Biserta Harbour would stand as a provocation to the other Mediterranean Powers. . . .

In his reply M. Goblet echoed the view explained in 1881 by M. Barthélemy St.-Hilaire to the British Ambassador in writing, that France intended Biserta Harbour not as a warlike but merely as a commercial development. . . .

[1] Chargé d'Affaires in London. [2] British Ambassador in Paris.

The British document, which is attached to the report of April 25th, states that the works are now being carried on with energy and with a perfectly distinct aim. This communication thus agrees with suggestions underlying the Italian note. Count Launay states very confidentially that the contents of the note have already been communicated to Lord Salisbury in confidence by Count Tornielli, who however received them coolly. Lord Salisbury expressed the opinion that the ratio of power in the Mediterranean would not be essentially altered by the existence of a fortified port at Biserta.

There is not justification for such indifference in face of an enterprise, which makes difficult the approach to the Dardanelles as well as endangering the trade route to India. It can only be explained either by the British hope that British interests will be protected without British co-operation, or by the fear of over-hasty action by Italy.

After your next meeting with Lord Salisbury you will probably be able to say which of these motives is present.

We also should dislike over-hasty action by Italy. We would welcome it, if the British and the Italian Governments did not exceed the measure of academic warning, which they both recognise to be necessary, in their representations in Paris. But on the other hand a complete refusal by England to co-operate in a question notoriously affecting British interests would be a symptom worth noting for our attitude and advice in Mediterranean questions.

I enclose a copy of the Chancellor's memorandum of May 15th. . . .

VIII. 240

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI,
June 2nd, 1890

Cipher.

I again spoke to Lord Salisbury on the subject of Biserta in the sense of your despatch of the 24th ult.

He said that for the moment he could not recall what reply Lord Lytton had received, when he carried out his instructions at the beginning of last year, but he would obtain the information and communicate with me. He, Lord Salisbury, might have received coolly, as was alleged, the latest Italian statements on the matter, but that was not indifference but merely to avoid adding to Signor Crispi's eagerness. His information was that the works at Biserta were so costly and difficult that they would take a long time to complete, and the present generation might not live to see it. Moreover, even when completed, Biserta would

offer no real base for French operations, which must always be carried out from Toulon, and this lessened considerably the danger from Biserta, as long as England controlled the sea. Finally he said that he was always anxious lest, supposing Italy should raise a protest about Biserta and was supported here, France might again propose that Italy should be indemnified, say, in Tripolis. This had already happened to him, Lord Salisbury, at the time of the Congress of Berlin. He had then rejected this proposal, and would think it undesirable now, as it would bring nearer a further dismemberment of Turkey.

I suggested that England's control of the sea was not *a priori* assured for ever, and that this anxiety had driven him to increase the fleet. Lord Salisbury said that this was quite possible, but if it happened, the British Empire would anyhow be in a very dangerous situation, whether France possessed Biserta or not.

Finally the Minister showed no disinclination on principle to take fresh steps about Biserta, if we were anxious for it.

VIII. 241

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *June 26th*, 1890

Telegram. Secret.

The Italian Chargé d'Affaires has just read me a telegram from Signor Crispi, containing the following:

The Italian Government has been informed confidentially that there are now in hand between England and France negotiations by which England renounces all her rights in Tunis under the former Capitulations, whilst France will raise no objections against the British protectorate over Zanzibar.[1] Signor Crispi holds that this news may probably be true, and is disturbed by it, as he would look on such a renunciation on England's part as a breach of the Anglo-Italian accord respecting the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean.

At Signor Crispi's desire I beg you at once to make confidential inquiries whether negotiations of the kind are actually in progress between England and France and to telegraph the result.

I had hoped, and I beg you to use your influence so that if England thinks it necessary to offer anything to France in compensation, this should be sought in Madagascar and not in Tunis.

German Note.

This arrangement was actually adopted by the Anglo-French Agreement of August 5th, 1890, which stipulated for mutual recognition of protectorates over Zanzibar and Madagascar.

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[1] Cf. p. 51.

VIII. 242

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *June 27th*, 1890

Cipher telegram.

Telegram of 26th received.

The Prime Minister has just assured me with decision that there is no question of negotiations with France regarding Tunis. Lake Chad, as hinterland for the French Senegal territory, was brought into discussion by the French.

He fully shared the views that I expressed, namely that compensation for the French would have to be sought in Madagascar.

Owing to pressure of home matters Lord Salisbury asked me to postpone discussion of other questions (i.e., our colonial Agreement) until to-morrow.

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *July 4th*, 1890

Cipher.

Lord Salisbury has just informed me that in the negotiations regarding the British protectorate over Zanzibar, the French have now brought out a proposal for compensation in Tunis. It is mainly fiscal in nature, but unacceptable.

I confirmed the Prime Minister in this view as much as I could with reference to Italy. He said that he still clung to his original opinion, which was also ours,—that compensation for France must be sought in Madagascar.

VIII. 243

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 16th*, 1890

Cipher telegram.

The Prime Minister informed me that the French Government had made three demands:

1. Recognition of the French rights regarding the award of the *exequatur* in Madagascar.

2. Appointment of a Commission to examine certain hinterland questions in Timbuctoo.

3. Purely commercial arrangements regarding the Anglo-Tunisian seven years' Commercial Treaty of 1875.

The first two points presented no difficulties, but the objections raised by the British manufacturers would probably make it impossible to agree upon the third.

Lord Salisbury added that he was openly keeping Signor Crispi informed of all connected with these negotiations. He had no idea of instituting any political changes in Tunisia. The continuance of the Capitulations was undoubted, even if the Anglo-

Tunisian Commercial Treaty fell entirely to the ground. But he could not recognise any right on Italy's part to object, if a good bargain was made here with France by a purely commercial arrangement.

I again urged him to avoid anything which could make Italy anxious about Tunis.

VIII. 244

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 16th*, 1890

Cipher telegram. Secret.

The Italian Government has learnt from an apparently reliable source that a few days ago a treaty was actually concluded between the French Government and the Bey, by which Tunis is to be annexed by France after the latter's death.

Count Tornielli is instructed to appeal to the 1887 Secret Agreement between Italy, Austria and England, and to ask Lord Salisbury how England stands with regard to that treaty and to demand a precise reply.

The Italian Ambassador gave me the above information under the condition of absolute discretion, since he is forbidden to mention it to anyone except Lord Salisbury. He is sure that Lord Salisbury knew already of the Franco-Tunisian Treaty, and sees in the fact that Lord Salisbury said nothing about it to Italy, the explanation of Signor Crispi's strong suspicion regarding the Anglo-French negotiations.[1]

VIII. 245

MEMORANDUM BY THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *July 17th*, 1890

The telegram, a copy of which the Italian Embassy submitted to me to-day, concerning a French Agreement of July 9th, whereby the protectorate over Tunis becomes a suzerainty after the death of the present Bey, uses such strong expressions, that the danger is not excluded that Italy may be induced to take over-hasty action. In Italy they seem to be thinking that the worst may happen and to wish us to admit that then the *casus fœderis* stands.

This excited feeling demands our calm consideration, and we have good reason now to make clear to ourselves the ultimate consequences of our attitude, since it will necessarily determine our initial measures.

The question whether we are legally bound to fight side by side with Italy, if that treaty exists and Italy finds it intolerable, must rest on Art. III of the treaty of February 20th, 1887.

[1] Cf. Palamenghi-Crispi, *Memoirs of Francesco Crispi.*

Art. III.

S'il arrivait que la France fît acte d'étendre son occupation ou bien son protectorat ou sa souveraineté, sous une forme quelconque, sur les territoires Nord-Africains, et qu'en conséquence de ce fait l'Italie crût devoir, pour sauvegarder sa position dans la Méditerranée, entreprendre elle-même une action sur les dits territoires Nord-Africains, ou bien recourir, sur le territoire français en Europe, aux mesures extrêmes, l'état de guerre qui s'ensuivrait entre l'Italie et la France, constituerait *ipso facto* . . . le *casus fœderis*.

The text leaves it equally open for the answer to be 'yes' or 'no'. I incline to Prince Bismarck's expressed opinion and conclude from the 'étendre', 'ou bien' and 'ou' that a mere change from the then existing protectorate to a suzerainty is not contemplated by the text. But I cannot admit that Italy is now forced to act 'pour sauvegarder sa position dans la Mêditerranée'; this position will not be impaired by the impending conversion of the protectorate into a suzerainty. Prince Bismarck's minute to Count Hatzfeldt's despatch of October 19th, 1888—'Make it clear to Rome that Tunis is no reason for going to war'—shows that he himself did not wish the treaty to apply to Tunis. On the other hand it must be admitted that this remark would not have been without result in the Foreign Office, if a different view had not been held here, a view resting probably on the note of February 15th, 1887, addressed by Rome to Count Launay, to the effect that the Italians 'ne sauraient être indifférents à ce que le protectorat français en Tunisie se transforme en souveraineté territoriale,' against which there was apparently no protest raised on this side.

Thus the legal question appears to be debatable, so we must adopt the interpretation which is most favourable to us.

If we adopt the Italian view, the final consequence for us is war with France. But if we refuse to admit the *casus fœderis*, our Alliance with Italy might break down. We must not ignore these final consequences, and must act with caution and skill.

A breakdown of our Alliance with Italy would mean for us, in the event of our being later at war with France, an increase by about 100,000 Frenchmen free to act against us. It might be still worse for our ally, Austria, whose rear would then be unsafe and even in danger. On the other hand, this Alliance is becoming of less and less military value. It rests on the personality of Signor Crispi, and it is doubtful whether it will last beyond 1892. It is possible that the loosening of our Alliance may drive Italy into the arms of France; this is hardly likely at first, for the very reason that they will find it difficult to come to an agreement about Tunis. If it came to a war between France and Italy, without involving us, we would be able to regard an Italian defeat much more coolly than the destruction of Austria.

A war with France caused by this question of Tunis opens in my opinion a much more doubtful perspective than the break up of our alliance with Italy. First, the course of this war, as far as Italy is concerned, would depend mainly on England; then, really in part, but more so according to the imagination of the Italians, the main decision would have to be sought in the Mediterranean, and this would tend to decide the usefulness of the Italian Army, where it could be spared from defending its long coast-line and frontier. The question whether the British Mediterranean squadron would act in time would be of essential importance in the first act of the campaign. Did we not know how little favourable English conditions are to quick decisions at the will of a single man, the course of the negotiations on the Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty of July, 1890, would have taught us. However this may be, we might only too easily find ourselves in the position of bearing the burden of this war alone. If the course of military events in Italy allowed part of the Italian Army to be sent to Germany, there would then be the question whether public opinion, with its feeling of being threatened on many points on its frontier and coast, would allow this and whether neutral Austria would allow Italian troops to be transported on her railways to Germany. How long Russia would remain neutral, whether it is correct that she would not risk another war with the Berdan weapon, and whether Italy might not be inclined by a separate peace to withdraw out of it earlier than we liked, are possibilities, which, vague as they are, must be considered.

For the German people there are however two reasons against a war started by the cause mentioned above. First, if we did not succeed in finding a *casus belli* other than Tunis, it would be impossible in Germany to raise that enthusiasm which takes its force from the consciousness that the war is inevitable, and expresses a national aim, and which we could not dispense with in any future war, which would call millions to the colours. Every future war must be popular. It is always difficult in wars which are necessitated by our alliances and in which the reason for war lies not in us, but in our Allies, to find a plausible motive. The purely theoretic nuance between the present protectorate and the coming suzerainty in Tunis is so subtle—in reality the French are sovereign there already—that we could hardly hope for the consent of the Bundesrat, which is necessary under Article 11 of the Constitution, let alone that of public opinion. The second reason, which makes a war inadvisable for Germany at present, is that we are in the middle of changing our infantry weapon.

Thus I am in no position to talk about recognising the *casus fœderis*. But in order not to risk endangering our alliance with Italy prematurely, we shall have to work for a calmer policy in

Italy, more ready to consider realities than impulses, and if that is no good, make it quite clear to Italy that she must put France in the wrong before we can help her otherwise than diplomatically. We must moreover first ascertain whether England is really prepared to go to war, if necessary. England has her own interests in the Mediterranean to defend against France, and England's active participation is an essential condition for the freeing of an Italian Army Corps for purposes which will make the conduct of the war easier for us.

In no case can it be asserted that the general situation, and our own in particular, is of such a kind as to make us bring about a war now. We must rather try to calm Italy, encourage England to support Italy by diplomacy and, if necessary, by war, and for ourselves to maintain an expectant reserve.

VIII. 250

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 18th*, 1890

Cipher telegram.

Lord Salisbury considers that the Italian proposal must first be examined more closely. They only know here that a Court official of the Bey's is said to have spoken to an unofficial Englishman in the sense in question.

Complications arising from this cause would, as I foresaw, be very unwelcome to Lord Salisbury. He agreed willingly, therefore, to go confidentially with me into all possible ways of obtaining a peaceful solution. He told me very confidentially that Signor Crispi has already spoken of compensation to Lord Dufferin,[1] which clearly means Tripolis, and is Italy's main object. Tripolis cannot be touched, if it is not wished to break up the Turkish Empire. But we might perhaps promise Tripolis to Italy in the event of Turkey being one day dismembered. In order to reassure the Italians about Tunis, the Powers might further request the Sultan, as Suzerain, to indicate who is to succeed the Bey at his death, if his brothers have renounced their heritage, as the Italians assert.

I beg for Your Excellency's views on these two proposals if possible, before next Monday, when the next meeting between Lord Salisbury and Count Tornielli takes place.

Regarding his attitude in the event of serious complications Lord Salisbury spoke clearly and frankly. British public opinion would not permit England to take part in a war about Tunis. The secret Agreement only bound England to confer with the Italian Government in such cases as the present one.

Report follows to-morrow.

[1] Ambassador in Rome.

VIII. 251

THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *July 19th*, 1890

Telegram. Secret.

With reference to yesterday's telegram.

Here also in all probability the Tunis question would not appeal to public opinion, so far as to justify a war. The material that we have here, and have meanwhile examined, shows that in the negotiations for our secret Agreement with Italy, only Tripolis and, later, Morocco were mentioned.[1] There was no word of Tunis. As far as we have ascertained, Tunis was not then regarded as falling under the Articles dealing with the subject.

Please treat the above as meant solely for your personal information, so that we may not appear to have been dissuading England.

With regard to the reported proposals, please say to Lord Salisbury that we regard *Tripolis* as falling under our secret Agreement with Italy, and it would be well for England also to reassure Italy on the subject. Moreover, if, after the Bey of Tunis' secret treaty has been proved beyond doubt, Italy wishes to take the proposed steps with the Sultan, we would support these steps jointly with England in Constantinople.

VIII. 253

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *July 19th*, 1890

Secret. Extract.

Lord Salisbury now began, without further criticism of the Italian action, to discuss the situation and the means by which the matter might be settled. He declared first that Signor Crispi had seemingly only raised the question of Tunis, which he himself regarded as lost, in order to attain another object. He could tell me in confidence that he had already informed Lord Dufferin that Italy must at least receive some compensation. He had not said what this was to consist of, but it might be assumed that Tripolis was meant. But if they desired to award to Signor Crispi this compensation at the present moment, the friendly Powers would be calling up another danger, which they had so far carefully avoided, the danger of reviving the whole Eastern question again and of prematurely bringing into question the existence of the Turkish Empire. If this was not wanted, there would only remain the possibility of putting off the desired compensation to Italy, until the moment came for dividing up the heritage of Turkey.

Then came the question of what satisfaction could be offered

[1] Cf. Vol. I, pp. 305, 315.

to Signor Crispi, if he should insist on steps being taken by the Powers in respect of Tunis. Lord Salisbury said at once frankly that the British democrats would under no circumstances allow him to take part in a war provoked by reason of the alleged treaty regarding Tunis. . . .

I should add that the difficulties which I have to overcome here in this question, are to be ascribed not only to the indecision and timidity of the Cabinet, but also very considerably to the personal irritation against Signor Crispi and his *manière de procéder*, caused by several similar affairs. No satisfactory attitude on the British Government's part is likely to be produced by direct discussion between England and Italy, and it will probably be to please Austria and us that Lord Salisbury does whatever he decides to do in this affair. I should therefore think it very advisable that we should agree with Lord Salisbury as soon as possible on a programme, bearing in mind the points suggested by him, and thus deter him from further deviations. A confidential communication to Signor Crispi that we are conferring with England and Austria, might perhaps calm his impatience.[1]

Minute by CAPRIVI to a despatch, dated July 23rd, 1890:

Signor Crispi wants to possess Tripolis without bloodshed. Lord Salisbury's wish to gain time will suit us very well in this affair. If the worst comes to the worst, we also need time.

VIII. 259

BARON VON HOLSTEIN, GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, TO COUNT ZU SOLMS-SONNENWALDE, IN ROME, *July 29th*, 1890

Telegram.

The Italian Chargé d'Affaires communicated here yesterday the contents of a telegram received from Signor Crispi, which throws doubt on the French declaration that no Tunis Succession Treaty exists.[2]

Though "not instructed to do so," he enquired whether Count Münster could not write to the French Minister that he had taken note of this declaration. I replied that after the categoric declarations, which M. Ribot and M. Waddington had given to Count Münster and Lord Salisbury respectively, an acknowledgment of this communication by us would be an insult, if not a challenge, to the French Government.

I then mentioned the Tripolis question and urged against overhasty action. For Tripolis, as for all other Italian acquisitions in the Mediterranean, we should always maintain the principle that the strengthening of Italy would be a direct advantage to the

[1] For the French attitude, see pp. 45, 51. [2] Cf. p. 120.

Powers now friendly to her, especially Germany and England, both of whom must in their own interests desire Italy to be strong enough to hold the balance against France in the Mediterranean. In order to realise this idea, it was less an occasion for agreements —which were superfluous—than for a suitable opportunity. Premature raising of the Tripolis question would make the Sultan suspicious and the political influence of the different Powers with the Porte would be dislocated to the disadvantage of those Governments, whose interests were identical with those of Italy, —especially to the disadvantage of England. Just now the Porte was always a factor to be considered. Italy would best assure her own future by keeping in touch with England as closely as possible on all questions of the Mediterranean and East. England had shown an attention to recent events, quite foreign to her ordinary habits.

You may perhaps discuss this theme with Signor Crispi at some time.

I add finally for your own personal information that I wrote to Count Münster to-day that he might, if he thought fit, write to M. Ribot that the Chancellor has received Ribot's declaration with satisfaction and thanks. Count Münster should so manage that the French Minister, now that the affair is settled as far as we are concerned, is not needlessly offended, as the Chancellor wishes to avoid that above all things.

VIII. 263

BARON VON HOLSTEIN, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *August 2nd*, 1890

Telegram. Private.

If Italy and France start partitioning the Province of Tripolis, it will not be easy to hold the Balkan Peninsula quiet, for the Porte may then at the eleventh hour conclude the alliance with Russia, which was mentioned by Prince Bismarck in his recent interview with a Russian reporter. This would be a bad look-out for England and Austria.

On the other hand, we cannot prevent Italy from doing so for fear of her breaking away.

A middle course might be for England, Austria and ourselves to promise Italy that no other European Power shall acquire Tripolis. For England and Austria this promise would be a lesser evil than a flare-up in the Balkans and the loss of Italy. Italy would have the certainty of acquiring all Tripolis, without long to wait, whilst the bargain now offered by the French gives Barca only, i.e., 40,000 square English miles out of 400,000, or one-tenth of Tripolis. For this Italy would be forced to look on, whilst

Tunis was annexed. It is doubtful if Italian public opinion would approve of this bargain.

Again—if France offered Italy a part of Africa to leave the Triple Alliance, Signor Crispi would reject this with contempt. But France perhaps actually hopes to achieve the same object by her present proposal. For if the partitioning of Tripolis was followed by trouble in the Balkans and a world-war, Italy, having just driven an amicable bargain with France, can hardly fight against her.

Finally an Italian statesman must ask himself what is to become of Italy, if after the war she finds herself alone in the Mediterranean between a Russian Constantinople and a French Biserta, whilst the other Powers, having learned from Italy's experiences in the hour of danger, will have cooled off and ceased to identify their interests with those of United Italy.

I think that much of the above might be used in Salisbury's letter to Crispi. *Résumé.*—To show that France's present offer is the beginning of a world crisis whereby Italy will be brought into a false position, isolated, and finally left at the mercy of Russo-French domination and caprice in the Mediterranean. Moreover the French offer is worse than the promises of the Powers.

VIII. 264–5

BARON VON HOLSTEIN TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *August 3rd*, 1890

Telegram. Extract. Secret.

Crispi feels also that he would be blamed by public opinion, if he separated from England, and will therefore follow the British lead, if this is decided enough. You have been told of Crispi's latest reply to Count Solms. It was that he was ' still awaiting a report from London. The only thing remaining to do was to wait for the actual seizure of Tunis and negotiate about Tripolis on the strength of it.'—This then is his plan in the event of England's raising an objection to this sudden and motiveless carving up of Turkey.

The game is now in Lord Salisbury's hands. If it goes wrong, his want of decision is to blame. If he says with decision, ' No, not for the present,' but makes promises for the future, it will reassure Crispi, who has already said so to Solms.

The event has its good side. It will convince the British Government that, in face of the existing greed for acquisitions, England must take up a more decided position than hitherto, diplomatically at first, for the defence of her own interests in the Mediterranean. . . .

VIII. 269

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *August 9th*, 1890

Cipher telegram. Secret.

Lord Salisbury does not believe in any serious risk that Signor Crispi will either give up his waiting attitude regarding Tripolis or draw nearer to France; but agrees with the possibility, and even the necessity, of averting that risk as far as possible, so as to avoid everything that might endanger peace or make the Sultan suspicious.

Therefore Lord Salisbury wishes by the next Messenger, who starts on the 15th, to instruct Lord Dufferin to confer with Signor Crispi very confidentially and ascertain whether the latter is holding to his waiting attitude and his present political engagements, or is relying on the promises of the friendly Powers.

In the second case, especially if Lord Dufferin becomes convinced that refusal would lead to Signor Crispi's fall or a change in Italy's policy, the Ambassador will be empowered to inform Signor Crispi very confidentially that, although Lord Salisbury is obliged to avoid all that might endanger peace or awaken the Sultan's suspicions, he would be ready to give oral assurances for the future within the bounds of possibility, and without failing to respect the Sultan's acknowledged rights. He would thus be able to recognise Italy's special and exclusive interest *à veiller au maintien du statu quo et de la souveraineté du Sultan dans toute l'étendue de la province de Tripolie.*

Lord Dufferin might add that Lord Salisbury is sure of a like readiness on the part of Germany, and, in the event of Signor Crispi's agreeing, he would support the same assurance in Vienna.

Lord Salisbury cannot make up his mind to a written assurance for fear of indiscretions in Constantinople, but I think he might be induced to concede this, as the negotiations proceed.

I consider it of great importance, that England should assume the leading part in Rome. I therefore ask for permission to speak in agreement. I am to see the Prime Minister on Monday afternoon. He goes on leave on Wednesday.

VIII. 271

German Note.

Lord Salisbury's letter to Crispi of August 4th (given in full by Palamenghi-Crispi, p. 468) contains in its first part the assurance that ' les intérêts politiques de la Grande Bretagne aussi bien que ceux de l'Italie ne comportent pas que le Tripolitaine ait une destinée semblable à la Tunisie. Il faut absolument parer à une telle éventualité quand elle nous menacera.' It then says that this danger lies in the far future and urges Crispi ' d'agir avec beaucoup de circonspection et de patience dans cette

affaire, et, tant que les desseins de la France n'ont pas pris corps d'éviter toute action qui pourrait nous compromettre irrévocablement avec le Sultan.'

COUNT ZU SOLMS-SONNENWALDE, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *August 11th*, 1890

Signor Crispi informed me yesterday that he had agreed with Lord Salisbury direct on the attitude to be observed on the Tunis question.

He told me nothing further of his agreement with the British Minister, but I gathered from his words that he thinks he is secure of British support in the affair for the future.

He said finally: 'Now that France distinctly denies the existence of the Treaty with the Bey of Tunis, we can wait quietly for what the French will do in Tunis.'

(The EMPEROR: '*He might have said this 4 weeks ago and saved us all a lot of ink.*')

VIII. 273

Extract from an Italian Memorandum (November 3rd, 1890) of a conversation between Signor Ressmann and M. Ribot.

'Monsieur Ribot répondait en alléguant que les travaux entrepris par la Compagnie du Port de Bizerta étaient faits sous l'égide du Bey, qui, dans sa qualité de Souverain, avait le droit incontestable de les poursuivre. L'engagement de ne point les exécuter ne résultait d'ailleurs d'aucun traité formel; et de simples conversations, ou notes diplomatiques—comme celle de M. Barthélemy-St. Hilaire qui lui était bien connue et que la voix publique avait qualifiée dans le temps comme anti-patriotique—ne sauraient tenir lieu d'un pareil traité. Les travaux projetés ne constituaient du reste une menace pour personne, la construction du nouveau canal de Bizerta devait par contre profiter à tout le monde et à l'Italie en premier lieu au surplus.'

VIII. 273–4

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *December 27th*, 1890

Telegram.

The Italian Government has made a fresh representation regarding the alleged French threat to Tripolis and the works at Biserta. The documents will be forwarded to you.

I sent the following telegram to-day to Herr von Radowitz:

'The recent notice, half-hidden in the French Press, of a regulation of frontiers to be desired between Tunis and Tripolis seems, according to communications from a reliable source, to be a *ballon d'essai*. It seems that France is now or very soon to bestir herself to secure, under the name of "regulation of frontiers," the Porte's

agreement to the annexation of the hinterland of Tripolis. We may assume that the French will use the Sultan's suspicions of Italy, which they have nurtured artificially, as a diplomatic lever to emphasise the importance of France's friendship.

'In granting a territorial concession to France, the Porte would create a doubtful precedent and take away the basis for diplomatic action now and later from those Powers, which, like ourselves, wish to see the integrity of the Turkish Empire maintained.

'You will bring these points to the Sultan's knowledge confidentially and through a safe channel. You may be able to discover whether the French negotiations are already in progress.'

I beg you to inform Lord Salisbury of these instructions as soon as possible, and explain to him that from many points of view Sir W. White's co-operation in this diplomatic step would be an advantage:

(1) as an exercise of the good relations between England and Germany, the impression of which on the Turks has been seen before in the question of Berat;

(2) to strengthen Crispi's confidence in the British Government—which is important from our point of view;

(3) to prevent any later suggestions on Crispi's part regarding the cession of Tripolis to Italy.

Lord Salisbury will undoubtedly share our view that we must reckon with Crispi's peculiarities, and that we cannot always treat with refusal or want of sympathy his perfectly groundless fears without risk of weakening the present political grouping.

Lord Salisbury will reflect whether, in consideration of this, it may perhaps be well, *after* the representations have been made in Constantinople, to indicate to Signor Crispi that the diplomatic situation is difficult for the moment, because the Porte has been disturbed by reports of Italian demands for the cession of Tripolis. Such anxieties are not to be removed without some effort.

As for the results of an official démarche concerning Biserta, we consider that it would seriously affect the commencement now of that enterprise. But it can do no harm if the Ambassador in Paris himself very confidentially calls M. Ribot's attention to the danger with which the works, begun hastily and with unnecessary noise, will threaten the peace of Europe.

VIII. *275–6*

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *January 6th*, 1891

Very confidential.

Yesterday I met Lord Salisbury for the first time since the turn of the year, and I used the opportunity for a confidential

discussion on politics and also on the instructions sent me by Your Excellency, following the recent Italian representations regarding Tripolis and Biserta.

When I named Signor Crispi, I was met by the sceptical, but not always either well-timed or well-conceived attitude which Lord Salisbury adopts towards the oft-repeated suggestions of the Italian Prime Minister. He said laughing: 'Il parait que M. Crispi se plaint de ma froideur dans l'affaire de Biserta. Il me fait du rest continuellement des querelles d'amoureux.' . . .

I said to Lord Salisbury that it seemed to me that Signor Crispi's discontent would be removed or at least considerably diminished, if Lord Salisbury would add to his refusal on principle, maintained up to the present, an assurance that he is paying due attention to events at Biserta in the interests of Italy and that if the military character of the works become evident, he will be ready to consider the right steps to be taken. Lord Salisbury willingly signified his agreement to this suggestion, and merely added that he could of course offer Signor Crispi no prospect of war-like action. I hope therefore that Count Solms will soon be able to ascertain the impression that this overture makes on the Italian Minister.

As far as I may judge, it would not be advisable, in face of this readiness on Lord Salisbury's part, to demand any more from him now, and especially any démarche by the British Ambassador in Paris. If Your Excellency agrees, I would find another opportunity, after the proposal has been forwarded to Rome and has been well received there, to suggest that Lord Lytton should, jointly with Count Münster, advise in a casual and friendly form that the works at Biserta should be proceeded with with less haste and noise.

CHAPTER X

THE GERMAN EMPEROR'S VISIT TO ENGLAND, JULY, 1891

[The following Memorandum was written during the Emperor William's visit to England (July 4th–13th, 1891). Another portion of it is given on page 83.]

VIII. 62

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON MARSCHALL, WINDSOR CASTLE, *July 6th*, 1891

Lord Salisbury then turned to the subject of Italy, praising Rudini warmly, but sharply criticising Crispi, whose whole character is evidently repugnant to him. He praised Rudini's moderate, statesmanlike methods and his judicious and dignified attitude towards France and seemed especially glad that the Biserta question is dead and buried.[1] I expressed entire agreement with this, and argued that the present very favourable attitude of the Italian Cabinet towards the cohesion of the Central Powers, and through it the general peace, was a good reason for supporting this Cabinet with all our strength. I also expressed my pleasure at the united attitude of the English Press regarding the Millevoye revelations and mentioned the good impression they had produced in Italy. Lord Salisbury said that he was ready to support Rudini's Cabinet, and turned next (I myself having refrained from pursuing the subject further) to that of the Franco-Italian relations. He called M. Billot, the French Ambassador in Rome, an unskilful diplomat. I took the opportunity to give the Premier, who is very open to humorous suggestion, a few proofs of the skill of French diplomats, especially M. Ribot, in giving away points in their dealings with Italy. Lord Salisbury seemed to have a very poor opinion of M. Ribot also. He related how he had lately agreed with France on a *modus vivendi* on the Newfoundland Fisheries question, which provided on the side of England for certain rights of transit. Now M. Ribot was demanding that the British Government should submit these clauses to the French Government for its approval before publication. A

[1] Cf. p. 54.

'légiste et avocat' might make such a demand, but scarcely a diplomat.

Lord Salisbury appeared to take much interest in the relations of Russia, and particularly of the Tsar, towards France. He believes that there is a strong guarantee for peace in the Russian Tsar's lethargy. I remarked that beside this lethargy there was also a security to peace in the Emperor's belief that he is the Chosen of Providence to spread abroad the Orthodox Faith, however sad the consequences may be for the heterodox who are affected. One point on which one might safely stake under certain circumstances was the Tsar's feeling for monarchy. Lord Salisbury confirmed this with the remark that the Russian Government had recently, albeit with proper consideration for England, shown nevertheless a very decided interest in the maintenance of the Portuguese Monarchy.

Turning again to the subject of French policy, Lord Salisbury began upon the French aspirations in Morocco, which are, I think, disturbing him. He mentioned new delimitations, the occupation of oases and the making of roads, and said that Spain, at least under the former Minister Moret, had been ready to come to an agreement with France regarding partition. I replied that we had similar information concerning French aspirations in the interior of Morocco, but that we possessed no direct interests in those parts. Our diplomatic support was at the service of our friends, and we should rejoice if England would consent to go hand in hand there with Spain and Italy. Lord Salisbury remarked that the Italians were not behaving well in Morocco. He did not wish to blame the Italian Government, but he had reason to complain of the conduct of the Italian Consul in Morocco.[1]

VIII. 64

COUNT VON METTERNICH, FIRST SECRETARY OF THE EMBASSY IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *July 11th*, 1891

During the Debate on the Foreign Office Estimates an Opposition speaker again attacked the Government for its attitude towards the Triple Alliance.

Mr. Labouchere protested against it and said the illusion no longer existed in Italy that Lord Salisbury's declarations would be binding on his successor. It was necessary to convince the electors, that if after an Election the Conservatives remained at the helm, Lord Salisbury would involve England in a Continental war.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Sir James Fergusson, replied that he had repeatedly declared that

[1] Cf. p. 141.

the so-called secret understanding between England and Italy consisted solely of an exchange of views regarding the maintenance of peace in Europe and the *status quo* in the Mediterranean. Sir James utterly denied the truth of Mr. Labouchere's statement that England stood in any near relationship to the Triple Alliance, and also that Member's remark that in a Franco-German war, English sympathies would be on the side of France. The consistent good relations between England and France had in no way been disturbed by the Government's policy. England's sympathies were on the side of those Powers which tried to keep the peace and observed international treaties without *arrière pensée.*

I enclose the *Times* report of the Debate.

German Note.

The following despatch refers to King Humbert's visit on July 6th to Venice on the occasion of the launch of the *Sicilia.* Whilst there he visited the British Mediterranean squadron and joined in celebrating 'the intimate and hearty relations between England and Italy'. The Emperor Francis Joseph had on June 23rd greeted the British squadron at Fiume.

ALFRED VON BÜLOW, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES AT ST. PETERSBURG, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *July 19th*, 1891

Confidential.

I reported to Your Excellency on the 9th inst. that in leading circles here there has been an expression of sensible and yet moderate feeling over the renewal of the Triple Alliance.

Since then I have more frequently observed that behind this outwardly calm criticism there is hidden a feeling of anxiety concerning England's attitude to the Triple Alliance. The visits paid to the British squadron at Fiume by the Emperor of Austria and at Venice by the King of Italy, and the enthusiasm, which greeted the Emperor and King, our Gracious Master, on English soil, in conjunction with the joyful proclamation of the renewal of the Triple Alliance, have awakened fears here and general speculation as to agreements between the British and Italian Governments. . . .

German Note.

The Emperor William had already paid two visits to the English Court (at Cowes) in 1889 and 1890. In July, 1891, the Emperor and Empress visited the capital of the country officially for the first time. On the occasion of a luncheon given to the Emperor in the Guildhall, he replied to the Lord Mayor's toast in English, using the following words: 'Following the examples of my Grandfather and my ever memorable Father, I shall always, so far as it is in my power, maintain the historic friendship between our two nations which, as Your Worship remarked, have so often stood together in defence of freedom and justice.' On July 12th the Emperor and Empress stayed with Lord Salisbury at Hatfield. It was reported—wrongly—in the newspapers that at Hatfield,

where the Emperor was accompanied by the Secretary of State, Baron von Marschall, a Protocol was drawn up, declaring the interests of the Triple Alliance to be identical with those of England.

The Italian Ambassador informed me in confidence that somewhat later he met the French Chargé d'Affaires, Count Vauvineux, coming from M. Schischkin. Count Vauvineux had given him further confirmation of the fact that *les bons accords* between England and Italy were causing anxiety here.

The Count had assured him that ' quant à l'Empereur Alexandre, il voit rouge.'

Just recently, however, the very peaceful tone of the speech delivered by His Majesty the Emperor and King at the Guildhall luncheon in London, as well as the declarations in the British Parliament by Fergusson, the Under-Secretary of State, regarding the Triple Alliance, have considerably reassured the leading circles here.

The Russian Press continues to preach the necessity for a formal Alliance between Russia and France. The morganatic marriage between the two States must cease, declares the *St. Petersburgski Wedomosti*, and be replaced by a fully authorised one based on equality of birth.

VII. 217

SCHWEINITZ, IN ST. PETERSBURG, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *August 22nd*, 1891

When speaking of the sensational circumstances accompanying the renewal of the Triple Alliance, M. de Giers and others belonging to various strata of society, referred to the visits paid by the Austrian Emperor and the King of Italy to the British squadron at Fiume and Venice, and above all to the splendid welcome extended to His Majesty, the Emperor, by the British people.

The Russians had gradually, though unwillingly, grown accustomed to the Triple Alliance. After the fall of Crispi they thought that it would break up, so that when it was renewed after all, they were annoyed. But when it appeared that the British Government intended to join it, and the British people gave a demonstration of their satisfaction, they were upset and felt themselves threatened.

German Note.

In the Franco-Russian exchange of notes at the beginning of the Dual Alliance there is always the talk (cf. Third French Yellow Book. *L'Alliance Franco-Russe*, 1918) of ' les circonstances qui ont caractérisé la renouvellement de la Triple Alliance ' as the *causa movens* for the Franco-Russian rapprochement. The chief of these is ' l'adhésion plus ou moins probable de la Grande Bretagne aux visées politiques que cette alliance poursuit.'

VIII. 66

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *July 21st*, 1891

Private letter. Extract.

As Your Excellency knows, the reception accorded to the Emperor by all classes of the British public has been thoroughly satisfactory and, I may add, has exceeded all expectation. In order to estimate this correctly, we should take into consideration the fact that for several years the Press, including that of England for the most part, has attempted to mislead public opinion here regarding His Majesty's political tendencies and other questions of a more personal nature. I may say that this was the reason why for the last two years I thought it necessary to oppose the pressure brought by various highly placed personages here that I should recommend an official Imperial visit to the capital. Shortly before the Emperor left, I took the opportunity to mention the matter to His Majesty, and had the satisfaction, which I cannot value too highly, of finding that His Majesty fully recognised the correctness of my views and at the same time expressed the greatest satisfaction at the warm reception by the public here.

Whilst one should not over-estimate the political significance of the British public's reception nor infer from it that public opinion would permit British policy to be actively employed in the interests of the Triple Alliance, without questions being asked, there remains nevertheless the pleasing fact that a British Cabinet which, like the present one, considers it to the country's advantage to support the peace policy of the Three Powers, will, when the time comes, no longer be checked to the same extent as hitherto by the personal prejudices of the public and its anxiety that England's friendship with us might draw her into war-like adventures.

Quite shortly before His Majesty's arrival I was able to observe that Lord Salisbury himself was not quite free from the double anxiety lest during the Emperor's visit an attempt might be made to force him into some kind of engagements for the future, and also lest public mistrust might be awakened and exploited by the enemies of the Government, on the assumption that the visit might be made the occasion for a political understanding. . . ,

A few days later a long and confidential conversation took place between His Majesty and Lord Salisbury at Hatfield. On the 13th the Emperor and Empress and their whole suite left for Windsor, to take leave of the Queen. His Majesty summoned me into his saloon in the train from Windsor to London, in order to discuss questions of policy with me alone. He expressed com-

plete satisfaction with the way in which his visit had passed off and with the warm reception given to him by the public. He said also that he had not failed to recommend Lord Salisbury, whose political utterances had thoroughly satisfied him, to adopt the most friendly attitude possible towards the Italian Government and a benevolent one towards the Sultan. His Majesty was greatly rejoiced to observe that Lord Salisbury fully appreciated the correctness and distinction of Marquis Rudini's attitude, as compared with his predecessor's. Most particularly His Majesty said again that he had not departed from the intention expressed at Windsor, and had in his conversation with Lord Salisbury carefully avoided any appearance of urging the Prime Minister to undertake diplomatic action or to make promises of any kind. . . .

Our procedure with regard to the speech by His Majesty in the City has made a specially good impression on Lord Salisbury. At Windsor the Secretary of State empowered me at my request, after the text of the proposed speech had been settled, to consult Lord Salisbury confidentially as to the English translation of it. The implied confidence touched the Prime Minister very pleasantly, as did the speech itself. He expressed entire agreement with it, and it has produced the best impression here generally and on the Queen in particular.

During the first days of the Windsor visit the Secretary of State and Lord Salisbury held a long and confidential conversation, at which I was not present. The Secretary of State informed me later, as he will have reported direct to Your Excellency,[1] that he was thoroughly pleased at Lord Salisbury's expression of his views on European politics, but was positively surprised by the decision with which the Prime Minister declared his readiness to support the Sultan in case he should be attacked. I may say here that it is this very determination of the Minister, as known to me, on this most important point, which has caused me for a long time past to consider a rapprochement between England and the Sultan of pressing importance in the interests of the Three Powers' peace policy. I am convinced that this object can only be attained, if preceded by an understanding regarding Egypt.

German Note.

The following despatch refers to the French Fleet's visit to Portsmouth (August 19 to 26) on the return voyage from Cronstadt. On the 20th Queen Victoria entertained the officers at a banquet. She stood up, as the Tsar Alexander III had done at Peterhof, when the Marseillaise was played. On the next day she visited the ships in person. Lord Salisbury was not present at the Reception or at the festivities in their honour. The

[1] Cf. Memorandum of July 6th.

enthusiastic British welcome to the French caused displeasure in Berlin, and on July 31st Count Hatzfeldt was directed to explain the reasons for the British attitude, which might lead to much misinterpretation and give the Sultan in particular an exaggerated idea of the power of France. Count Hatzfeldt answered on the same day that he did not believe at present that a demonstration in favour of France was intended by the British Government. The latter was moved rather by considerations of home policy, and by the fear that any different attitude might be represented at the Elections as an act of partiality against France.

[The despatch shows that the visit was proposed by the French.] (Cf. Sir S. Lee, *King Edward VII*, I, p. 667.)

VIII. 69

PRINCE HENRY VII OF REUSS, IN VIENNA, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *August 24th*, 1891

Confidential.

Count Kalnoky mentioned to me to-day the visit of the French Fleet to Portsmouth.

He described the manner in which the British have received their neighbours as a quite exceptionally clever move on Lord Salisbury's part. It has prevented the Great Powers from being divided into two sharply opposed groups, a constellation which is always a danger to peace, since it easily wounds national vanities and sensibilities and drives them to eccentricities of action.

Now, he said the balance was to a certain extent stabilised; French vanity was flattered, and the two great maritime Powers could once more live as good neighbours to each other. Moreover, it would annoy the French, as it would the Russians, that it was no longer a matter of the exclusive friendship of Russia and France.

Germany and her Allies need not be disquieted by the exchange of compliments at Portsmouth. It altered in no way the position of England with regard to the Triple Alliance. As is known, the British Government had declared that it would never side with the aggressor, and further that it desired the *status quo* in the Mediterranean. This was the most we could expect from England. After the cards were on the table, these two aims might be very useful to us, if a war broke out with France, as it by no means indicated an alliance. He believed also that no one could deceive himself into thinking that such a thing existed.

The outcry drawn forth from the French chauvinists was a proof that the friendly reception of the French had been good policy on England's part.

About the invitation question, which has been so vehemently discussed in the French Press, Sir A. Paget spoke to me as follows:

As early as in May this year the French Government informed Great Britain of the intended visit of the French Fleet to Russia

and inquired whether it would be well received if the squadron ran into an English harbour on the return voyage. The answer from London was that they would be very pleased to see the fleet in an English harbour, and that if it suited Her Majesty's plans, she would be graciously pleased to receive the French officers at Osborne.

VIII. 71

COUNT METTERNICH, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *August 26th*, 1891

The French squadron under Admiral Gervais left the hospitable English coast to-day and returned to Cherbourg.

I think that I may venture to sum up the general impression made on public opinion here by the presence of the French squadron on the English coast, as far as it is represented by the Press, as follows:

The Press adopts the unmistakable line of convincing the world of England's complete freedom of action and of taking the ground from under any assumption that, as regards the future, England is bound in her decisions to one side or the other. If I may add my personal opinion, it is that, in spite of the unusually friendly protestations on this occasion, public opinion in England is no more inclined towards France than it was before the visit, and that certainly no after-effects are to be expected. My humble opinion is that on the contrary Germany and the Triple Alliance have grown in popularity. Quite recently the Conservative Press has spoken in favour of the policy of the Triple Alliance with quite un-English warmth of feeling, and the whole of England has just now shown unmistakable sympathies with His Majesty the Emperor and the policy followed by him. The well-known traditional trend of the British public in favour of maintaining a neutral attitude in foreign politics as long as possible, causes it to view its somewhat open partisanship for the Triple Alliance as an exceptional act of boldness, which it has committed, but is now occasionally afraid of. It has therefore been glad to use the French visit as a pretext for giving expression to its neutral attitude in foreign politics in a natural manner.

German Note.

Events show that the Italian efforts to promote a firm Agreement with England were unsuccessful in spite of the support given by Germany as well as Austria. After the conversation reported by Count Hatzfeldt on June 8th, when Lord Salisbury requested him to 'hold up the whole matter for a little', the British Premier never returned to the subject. The Foreign Office documents relating to it show a large gap from the end of August, 1891, to Lord Salisbury's retirement from office in August, 1892.

CHAPTER XI

THE MOROCCO QUESTION, DECEMBER, 1890, TO JULY, 1892

[When Sir John Drummond Hay was British Minister at Tangier, Great Britain possessed more influence with the reigning Sultan of Morocco than any other Power. But even he was unable to obtain for British trade the consideration which was held to be due to it. A new attempt was made by Lord Salisbury, who particularly instructed Sir Charles Euan Smith to avoid anything which might arouse the jealousies of other Powers. The French, however, were determined to wreck the objects of Sir Charles's Mission to the Court at Fez, and their encouragement, combined with the Sultan's disinclination to favour any foreigners more than he could help it, paved the way for the decline of British influence in Morocco. The German, Italian and Spanish Governments supported Great Britain, but not at all actively. (Cf. E. D. Morel, *Morocco in Diplomacy*, 1912, and S. Bonsal, *Morocco as it is*, 1893.)]

VIII. 293

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *December 25th*, 1890

From the point of view of purely German interests, an increase of French influence in Morocco would be desirable,—in fact, anything that draws the attention and strength of France away from our borders. On the other hand, we cannot ignore the anxiety that Sir W. Kirby Green's [1] Francophil attitude which, as Count Tattenbach's [2] reports will have informed you, he has appeared to observe ever since his arrival in Morocco, will injure the good relations between England and Italy and give more colour to the opinion in Italy, which regards the friendship of France—not only for Italy, but for other Powers also—as being more valuable than any other.

I beg you to explain this anxiety to Lord Salisbury, when you happen to be discussing the subject.

German Note.

Hatzfeldt reported on March 27th that Count Tornielli was full of deep mistrust of England's policy in Morocco. He imagined that, in view of possible eventualities, England wished to possess herself of Tangier,

[1] British Minister at Tangier. [2] German Minister at Tangier.

and that arrangements by other Powers, which might in any way shut the door on these schemes, would be little welcomed in London. (Cf. p. 132.)

VIII. 295

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *March 31st*, 1891

Extract.

. . . Germany has every reason to forward England's schemes in Morocco, so long as there is a clear wish on England's part in this direction. The position of Italy and Spain with regard to the question is different from ours. But both are probably to be won over by promises of suitable compensation in North Africa —Italy in particular, who is interested in the strengthening of England's position in the Mediterranean, and also in the increased certainty that England will take part in the next war.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that Count Tornielli is trying to use the Morocco question as a wedge between Italy and England. As the Italian Ambassador may be under the influence of a *parti pris*, it will perhaps be best to leave him in the dark as to our views and intentions.

You, on the other hand, should consider and report when and how, if at all, the affair can be discussed between you and Lord Salisbury.

VIII. 296–7

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI (SIGNED BY COUNT VON METTERNICH), *June 10th*, 1891

Very confidential.

In the course of our confidential conversation Lord Salisbury showed some surprise at the selfish motives ascribed from various quarters to British policy in Morocco. I replied that he could not be astonished, because Sir W. Kirby Green's very peculiar action had thoroughly justified such a supposition.

I remarked also that he well knew that we had no direct interests in Morocco. It had always been my personal impression —and I thought I had told him of it before—that, if ever there was an internal break-up there, the establishment of Spain on the Moorish coast would continue to be the best for England, as well as for Italy, quite apart from the fact that I knew that in Spain it was regarded as a matter of life and death to prevent the opposite coast from falling into other hands, and especially those of France.

Lord Salisbury answered half in joke that if ever it came to a partition there, he had as good an appetite as any others ; at the same time he shared my opinion that Spain on that coast would be the least dangerous to England. I repeated in reply that we

had no direct interests to pursue in Morocco, and I therefore thought it unlikely—as, in consideration for Italy, we should hardly welcome a French occupation—that, when the time came later, we should oppose any wishes expressed to us by Lord Salisbury.

VIII. 297

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *June 13th*, 1891

Secret.

Lord Salisbury's remark, as described by you in your despatch of June 10th, as to his 'appetite' for acquisitions in Morocco on a suitable opportunity, is a valuable and welcome symptom for German policy. Lord Salisbury would probably have been more reserved, if he had realised our wish that England should set herself in acute and lasting rivalry with France, by seizing Tangier and Spartel. By assuming that we, out of platonic friendship for Spain, might help that State, which is of little use for European purposes, to acquire part of that territory, Lord Salisbury wishes to give us a hint not to engage ourselves with Spain. Your closing remark, after gaining the object of your enquiry, that we should not oppose any of Lord Salisbury's wishes, represents the calm and decidedly friendly attitude which we observe in this question towards England.

In her Morocco policy Spain has to choose between a French and a British Alliance. The first is the most favourable, for England's claims on Moorish territory would certainly be considerably less than those of France. Moreover in the event of war, England can hold out to Spain the prospect of acquisitions in Algeria, towards which already a strong current of Spanish immigration is setting.

In your next conversations with Lord Salisbury I beg you bring out this point of view as much as possible, and to continue to avoid arousing the suspicion that it is not the natural development of world events, but the policy of Germany, that is forcing on Anglo-French rivalry in the Mediterranean.

VIII. 298

BARON VON STUMM, IN MADRID, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *June 28th*, 1891

Cipher.

M. Paul Cambon [1] lately declared to the Spanish Foreign Minister [2] that France regarded Tuat as part of her African possessions, and would proceed at once to occupy it, if the Sultan of Morocco exercised sovereign rights of any kind there.—I beg that those reports from Tangier, which concern French and British action in Morocco, may be communicated to me here.

[1] French Ambassador in Madrid. [2] C. M. O'Donell, Duke of Tetuan.

[Tuat lies to the south of Algeria, approximately 0° longitude, 27° N. latitude. It was not until 1900 that the French actually took possession of it.]

VIII. 299

MEMORANDUM BY THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, FOR BARON VON ROTENHAN AND HOLSTEIN, *July 20th*, 1891

Extract.

What do we know of the final aims of France's North African policy? I know it is a great Empire: Algiers, Senegal, Congo. This aim would not depend on the possession of Morocco. Tuat and Tidikelt are very loosely connected with Morocco, and Tuareg not at all. It is questionable whether the Sahara Railway is possible at all, but even its most Easterly projected line would hardly touch Moorish territory (Oran—Timbuctoo).

The French will scarcely attain this object before the next European war. An undertaking costly in men and money. Algiers already costs more in men and money than it brings in. Since our interests do not clash with this scheme, it will suit us for France to get more deeply involved in it. Our very furthest interests in the Cameroons would end on Lake Chad and can exist beside the great French Empire. This Empire could only be of use to France if it provided a good market for her industry. . . .

Had we not better let matters proceed quietly there? So long as England and France still *want* something in that part of the world, the uncertainty will keep them in rivalry. But if they *get* it they will live at peace beside one another—a condition which we ought not to hurry on. Neither England nor France will lay much store on help from Spain.

VIII. 301

Enclosure I.

ITALIAN MEMORANDUM

20 *Octobre*, 1891.

Le duc de Tétuan a affirmé au Marquis Maffei[1] que, si le Sultan du Maroc s'abstiendra de contre-carrer les desseins de la France dans la région sud de Figuig, le Gouvernement français ne mettra pas à exécution la menace d'occuper les territoires de Tuat et de Gurara. Dans le cas contraire il les occuperait.

L'Ambassade d'Italie a été chargée de prier Son Excellence M. le Baron de Marschall de l'informer de l'attitude que compte prendre le Gouvernement Impérial, si le Gouvernement français, ne tenant aucun compte des remontrances des Cabinets de Berlin, Rome et Londres, arrivait à accomplir ses desseins.

[1] Italian Ambassador in Madrid.

Enclosure II.

MEMORANDUM BY HOLSTEIN, GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *October 20th*, 1891

The question whether France is occupying a disputed border territory of Morocco, is for Europe—perhaps with the exception of Spain—merely of importance, because it is the first step towards the absorption of Morocco.

It is a good opportunity for Italy to show the British Government that the Cabinet of Rome does not mean to work for England without England.

Up to the present England has tried to withdraw from any firm arrangement with a common object. For this reason the present undecided question is an occasion for Italy to declare in London that she is ready to say and do the same as England in the Tuat affair.

If the British Government declares that a war cannot be risked for the sake of a dispute over a piece of territory, and that British public opinion would oppose it, etc., then let Italy admit this argument, abstain from herself intervening in the question, and prevent Spain from doing so.

It will be a good lesson for England, if Italy makes her action for their common interests—i.e. preponderantly British—depend on British co-operation; for England takes a lively interest in Morocco and in her fate after the present régime disappears. The experience will also be useful for settling other and more important questions in the East and the Mediterranean, which may perhaps come forward in the near future, and in all of which England will first try to get British interests looked after by other Powers without herself co-operating.

If, after England has returned a refusal to engage herself in the Tuat question, Italy also on her side remains out of it, it is to be conjectured that France will seize that territory. This will provide a practical proof for British public opinion that neither in Morocco nor in other Mediterranean questions will Italy take a single step forward without co-operation and reciprocity from England. The lesson contained in this is more valuable than Tuat, for it will on the next occasion make easier the task of the British statesmen of either Party, who in view of certain eventualities wish to make certain of active co-operation with Italy.

For Germany the 'Tuat' idea has no political importance, although the moment is imaginable, when we should enter into a war for Italy's sake on account of Tuat without troubling about the letter of our treaty, if Italy's existence were threatened.

We hope, therefore, that Marquis Rudini will make the Tuat

question into an occasion for diplomatic and not warlike action, and one directed at the London Cabinet, as a preparation for later and vaster eventualities.

VIII. 303

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *October 23rd*, 1891

Cipher telegram. Secret.

In the course of a very confidential conversation to-day Lord Salisbury said to me, that, if the Sultan of Morocco asked for his advice, he would advise him not to relinquish Tuat. On this basis I think that a common attitude by England and Italy in Morocco might be possible, particularly if I were able to inform Lord Salisbury confidentially beforehand as to Marquis Rudini's intentions in the matter.

The Prime Minister would especially like to learn the views now held in Spain, because he imagines it, in spite of later intelligence, to be an accomplished fact that a definite understanding has for some time existed between Spain and France as to certain schemes of partition in Morocco. He added very confidentially, as a corroboration of his former statements, that he wished the integrity of the Sultanate to be maintained. He set no store on England's acquiring certain points such as Cape Juby, but he must stipulate that other Powers did not enrich themselves there.

I merely informed the Minister provisionally that, according to my information, Italy would go just as far as himself. I trust that Your Excellency approves of this.

VIII. 305

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *October 27th*, 1891

Cipher telegram.

Lord Salisbury sent word to Rome that he considered Italy and Spain to be most closely interested in Morocco, and Marquis Rudini replied that according to opinion in Rome, England and Spain are the most nearly interested.

In a very confidential discussion of the question the Prime Minister told me to-day that he was inclined to support diplomatically any claim that Spain might make regarding Tuat, but that he would not let such a question drive him into actual conflict with France or into active intervention in Morocco, as he would not find support for it in Parliament.

Lord Salisbury wishes now to gain information on the intentions of Spain, and I advised him personally, at his request, to approach Marquis Rudini confidentially but frankly, and inform

him to what extent he could eventually support Spain diplomatically. He was willing to do this. On this basis it might be possible to bring about an understanding by which England and Italy joined in supporting Spain, without German mediation.

Lord Salisbury is evidently irritated by Ribot's latest speech on Egypt and remarked that he now felt no special obligation to consider the French Government.

VIII. 307

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *November 2nd*, 1891

Telegram.

Count Launay communicated to me to-day the contents of a telegram received from Rome, as follows:

'Le Marquis Maffei informe de Madrid que son collègue d'Angleterre, en suite d'un entretien avec le Duc de Tétuan, a envoyé avant-hier soir la communication suivante au Foreign Office:—"Le Ministre d'État croit qu'il y a lieu de pousser le Maroc à traduire en acte le conseil, qui lui a été donné dès le début par les représantants d'Italie, d'Espagne et d'Angleterre, à savoir d'adresser une Note au Gouvernement français pour l'inviter à s'expliquer, sur quelles bases il fonde ses prétensions sur l'oasis de Tuat, et que, si le Cabinet de Paris ne répondait pas d'une manière satisfaisante, Sa Majesté Shérifienne devrait répliquer en affirmant à son tour son propre droit, et recourir alors aux bons offices des Puissances intéressées au maintien du statu quo dans son Empire."

'La même déclaration a été faite par le Ministre d'État espagnol au Marquis Maffei.

'Le Marquis di Rudini adhère en principe au projet Tétuan, sauf bien entendu de connaître d'abord ce qu'en pense Lord Salisbury.'

In defining the term 'Puissances intéressées', it must be borne in mind that Germany possesses not immediate, but only secondary interests, as a possible reserve for her Allies in case of need, but not for Morocco.

A European Conference, at which the Spanish Government seems to be aiming, has this against it, that so it would be easier than without a Conference, for France to find a formula by which she could secure Russian support.

Up to now there are no indications pointing to the fact that Russia wishes to take a part in this question; a Conference *would* drag her into it. It would be more practical for the Cabinets of Madrid, Rome and London to treat the problem as already settled and not liable to further examination, and to hand in their statements in Paris, identical in sense, if not word for word.

Owing to the mistrust existing between London and Madrid on the question of Morocco, Italy would be the right intermediary for bringing the attitude of the three Mediterranean Powers into harmony.

VIII. 308

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO BARON VON STUMM, IN MADRID, *November 2nd*, 1891

Telegram.

The Cabinets of London, Rome and Madrid are paying attention to the question of Tuat. Each of them has asked the other two what they wish to do, and neither has so far said exactly how far it means to go. The British Cabinet has done nothing but ask—with the result that Madrid has merely replied that it intends to advise the Sultan to turn, in case of need, to the 'interested Powers'. This reserved answer has caused surprise in London, and Spain is suspected of having reasons for keeping France in Morocco. Even more than the notion of a territorial understanding is it supposed that the great French financiers are taking advantage of Spain's present embarrassments to wring political concessions out of the still undecided Tuat question.

For the present I see no reason myself to join in these suspicions, but I believe still that the first cause of the Spanish reserve is the fear of being pushed forward against France all by herself.

A better way of dealing with the matter would have been, if the Spanish Minister had at once replied by asking what steps, if any, England was inclined to take in Paris with a view to maintaining the *status quo* in Morocco,—on the assumption that Italy and Spain would do the same. . . .

Germany, who is not directly interested in the Tuat question, but only through her friends, has no intention of playing a leading part. But you can discuss the matter confidentially with the Marquis Maffei, who is known here to be quite trustworthy and discreet.

It is not an English habit to propose anything positive of their own initiative. But it is not impossible that England may consider proposals made from outside. A clear question by Spain to London as to whether they would be inclined, perhaps with Italy as a third party, to make diplomatic suggestions in Paris on the subject of Tuat, might, in spite of the suspicions caused by Spain's present reserve, achieve a favourable result. A combined step of that sort by the three, if made at the *right* moment, would certainly tend to frighten France off it.

Marquis Rudini knows perfectly well our position with regard

to this undecided question. You will please request Marquis Maffei to confine his report on your conversation to a private letter to Marquis Rudini personally, and not to mention it outside, and especially not to the Duke of Tetuan.

VIII. 310

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT ZU SOLMS-SONNENWALDE, IN ROME, *November 4th*, 1891

Telegram. Extract.

. . . The idea of a European Conference, which seems to appeal to the Madrid Cabinet, must be nipped in the bud. At a Conference Russia, who so far has shown no inclination to take a part in Moorish affairs, would be obliged to take France's side for reasons of general policy. The grouping of the three Mediterranean Powers against France, in diplomatic isolation, without a Conference, would be decidedly better and holds a fairly certain promise of success.

[Baron von Stumm telegraphed on November 5th that the Italian Minister in Madrid wished to indicate to the Duke of Tetuan, in the form of a personal expression of opinion, the method described as practical by the Germans.]

VIII. 311

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO BARON VON STUMM, IN MADRID, *November 5th*, 1891

Telegram.

The suggestion in question will probably be put officially by the Italian Government to the Spanish Government.

If the Duke of Tetuan refers to the question with you, please state that Germany only plays an indirect part in Mediterranean questions, and that reserve would not be maintained for Morocco, but only for Italy ; that you consider that Spain has a real interest in making use diplomatically of England, as the greatest Mediterranean Sea-power, in the Moorish question. Spain can without risk go as far as England declares her readiness to go, especially since Italy will certainly come in as a third party, and France, if she pursues any aggressive policy in Morocco, will be in isolation against these three. Therefore, if Spain disapproves of the French occupation of Tuat, she has an interest in putting her question quite clearly in England, not in the form : ' What does England mean to do in the Tuat question ? ' but : ' Is England ready to take diplomatic steps with the Sultan or in Paris on the subject of Tuat, in company with Spain and Italy ? '

VIII. 311

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *November 8th*, 1891

Telegram.

Count Launay is sending to-day to Rome the following secret telegram, agreed by us both:

'An official "Havas" telegram of yesterday reports that the Council of Ministers decided to move a credit in the Chamber for strengthening the post at El Goleah and making a forward movement in the direction of Tuat. This means that the French Government is hastening to bring the question of Tuat to a decision. Count Hatzfeldt also telegraphs to-day that it would be advisable that the three Cabinets should make the intended overtures to the Sultan and in Paris *at the same time*. He states as his personal view that Lord Salisbury will now almost certainly favour this idea, whereas it may be different in a few months when face to face with a *fait accompli*.

'It will be the Cabinet of Rome's affair, if Your Excellency agrees, to explain this idea in Madrid.

'Count Hatzfeldt has been instructed to *appuyer séparément et sous main auprès de Lord Salisbury l'action Italo-Espagnole, lorsqu'elle se produira.*'

You will deny this, if necessary.

VIII. 314

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *November 13th*, 1891

Cipher telegram.

Copy of the telegram of November 11th received.

To-day, perhaps as a result of the Cabinet meeting, the Prime Minister was more cautious and less inclined for diplomatic action regarding Tuat. He said that it would not in any case restrain the French from acting against the oasis, which in itself would not much matter, and that it might be best for the interested Powers to save their strength for the crisis, which must come later, i.e., if it had to do with Morocco itself and particularly the coastal districts. (CAPRIVI: '*The coast is the only interest that affects England.*')

Not till after a long detailed discussion was it possible to induce Lord Salisbury (who denied for the rest any inclination to spare France on his part) to promise that he, in order not to separate himself from Italy, would offer the agreed advice in Tangier. He also promised me that he would instruct Lord Dufferin by telegram in this sense to confer with Marquis Rudini. The latter will do well to speak fully and openly to the British

Ambassador and not to allow any not quite satisfactory reports of Count Tornielli's to influence him. The latter, who has asked for an interview, intended to say as little as possible to Lord Salisbury.

Considering the Prime Minister's present mood, I thought it best to confine the proposed programme to the démarche in Tangier, so as to prevent the threads from snapping. Also it is not unlikely that Marquis Rudini may discuss with Lord Dufferin the possibility of a communication to Paris.

Lord Salisbury had no recollection of any Spanish suggestion regarding Tuat having been made here during his absence.

VIII. 315

COUNT ZU SOLMS-SONNENWALDE, IN ROME, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *November 19th*, 1891

Cipher telegram.

As reported in my telegram of the 12th and mentioned in Marquis Rudini's letter to me [not given], the latter, after the Spanish refusal to take part in a démarche in Paris, has modified his instructions to London and Berlin and requests Lord Salisbury to draw up the formula. He has telegraphed to London and Berlin that there must now be an understanding regarding action to be taken with the Sultan of Morocco. The first instruction regarding the formula was thus called forth by Spain's refusal, and Count Tornielli apparently received the second telegram before he had carried out the instructions given to him in the first, and therefore had to refrain from carrying them out. Marquis Rudini is still in Palermo. '(CAPRIVI: *We shall now wait quietly and see what the parties most interested will do.*)'

VIII. 318

COUNT VON TATTENBACH, IN TANGIER, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *April 19th*, 1892

Extract.

A few weeks ago the Rev. H. R. Haweis, a well-known preacher and periodical writer in London, made a short visit in Tangier, and whilst here, he was much at the British Legation.

An article published by him in the April Number of the *Fortnightly Review* under the title of 'The Coming Crisis in Morocco' contains much more than even a journalist, as ready with his pen as he is, could write after a week's stay in a quite strange country, unless very good sources of information were open to him. . . .

[The conclusion arrived at by Mr. Haweis in his article was that England and France should divide Morocco between them.]

VIII. 318

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT VON TATTENBACH, AT TANGIER, *May 4th*, 1892

To be deciphered by yourself.

Haweis' essay was known here. Your report that he was directly inspired by the British Minister is important in view of our future attitude towards the Moorish question.

Smith would like to divide Morocco with France, but our expectation is that England and France will be divided by Morocco. This last conception alone might induce us to take the responsibility before our friends, especially Italy, of supporting England's steps forward in Morocco.

The united action of England, Italy and Spain on the Tuat question, which we advised at the time, led, despite its lack of energy, to a political defeat for France, as your report describes. It naturally did not completely put an end to the question, but the success of our action so far is all the more pleasing, because it was attained, as we now see, in spite of Smith's resistance. He is responsible for much of the delay and difficulty in that understanding between England, Italy and Spain.

Could you find an opportunity to form an opinion of the attitude of the French Mission lately towards the idea of partitioning Morocco after Haweis' plan? You would have to avoid a direct enquiry. The French representative's earlier statement that the Straits of Gibraltar would be no longer important for France after the completion of the Canal-communication between the Ocean and the Mediterranean, gains a certain significance from the fact that the Canal project lies in the indefinite future. It means that for the present the Anglo-French understanding, which Smith desires, by which England would become possessed of both sides of the Straits, could hardly be accepted by France in view of her public opinion. It is thus important to observe this point continually and not to be content with suppositions.

For the present our support of Smith's proposals will not extend to making it easy for foreigners to acquire land, for the ostensible reason that Germany is not interested in that, but for the actual reason that we must have a clearer view of Anglo-French relations regarding Morocco, if we are to come forward in favour of British interests. We have already said that we cannot assist a British policy, which aims at solving one of the most important Mediterranean questions with France alone, and would be followed by great injury to Italy.

VIII. 320

COUNT ZU SOLMS-SONNENWALDE, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *July 10th*, 1892

The Minister, Brin, turned the conversation on to Morocco, probably as a result of a discussion with the Spanish Ambassador.

He said that Lord Salisbury always wished Italy and Spain to take the initiative, in order to deter France from taking action either against or in Morocco ; he therefore was not at all inclined to lodge a protest in Paris and thus appear somewhat as a disturber of the peace. Lord Salisbury continued to hold aloof and wished to leave it for others to work in England's interests.

(CAPRIVI: '*Brin is right, and it is not to our interest to engage Italy in Morocco, and certainly not with a Gladstone Cabinet in power.*')

I replied to the Minister that Lord Salisbury's reserve had its natural explanation in the present movement for an Election. Before the result of the Election was known, one could not possibly form a clear opinion of how British policy would shape itself.

German Note.

The following despatch refers to Sir Charles Euan Smith's visit to the Sultan's Court at Fez in the early summer of 1892, on which occasion he attempted to renew the Anglo-Moorish Commercial Treaty. His harsh demeanour—he went so far as to tear in pieces the draft for a Treaty, handed to him by the Moorish Government—wrecked the negotiations. (Cf. S. Bonsal, *Morocco as it is*, p. 123.)

COUNT VON TATTENBACH, IN TANGIER, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 27th*, 1892

In cipher.

I am informed that Smith attributes the cause of the failure of his Mission to French action. France fears England's political and commercial preponderance in Morocco. She is hurt, because Lord Salisbury has made the mistake of putting off his request for French co-operation till too late. In the end, this will not have helped Lord Salisbury in the Election.

To my question as to the state of the Tuat question, Smith replied that he had received the impression that the Sultan had made up his mind to give up Tuat. On my asking, he said that the impression had come to him from remarks made by the Sultan. More than this he did not say.

From all this one must conclude that the character of the new British Minister, his antecedents in Zanzibar,[1] his behaviour during his first month here, the demands made by him at Fez, and his awkward demeanour, have been used by the French cleverly and successfully to convince the Sultan that it is to his

[1] Cf. Vol. I, p. 240.

interests to stand well with France, in face of England's attitude, especially since France allied herself with Russia and has thereby gained superiority over England and the Triple Alliance, and that Tuat will not be too dear a price for him to pay for the friendship of France.

Thus an entirely different situation has been created, from the one which I left on my departure from Fez in June, 1890. A year and a half later, when the late British Minister visited the Sultan's Court and pressed him hard about Cape Juby, I expressed anxiety lest it would open the door to French influence. Luckily, however, this fear was entirely removed as a result of the Tuat affair. But instead of using this question, which touches the Sultan so nearly, to separate him from France completely and permanently, England has during the last 18 months succeeded in making French influence predominant, so that, in spite of the very far-reaching compliance which was shown at the close, Smith has been able neither to conclude the Commercial Treaty, nor to exercise any influence in the matter of the Russian Minister or in the question of Tuat.

The strengthening of French influence at the Court will react unfavourably on Italy and Germany also.

As for Italy, the Vizir Gharnit said to Smith: 'They need not trouble to please Italy.' This, at any rate, is what Smith told the Italian Minister.

With us the Sultan is apparently trying to continue the good relations, from which he has often profited. But he must be made to understand that under the altered circumstances this will not be possible, and it may perhaps be as well to explain this to him clearly and thoroughly. (CAPRIVI: *'Let us first wait and see how relations between England and the Triple Alliance will turn out.'*)

One good result of Smith's campaign ever since his first arrival in Tangier is that there is markedly a state of discord between France and England, which will certainly be further increased by the rejoicings in the French Press over the failure of Smith's Mission. Nevertheless, it is curious that Smith lays none of the blame on Count d'Aubigny,[1] and that, as I hear, the Liberal papers in England are already saying that the Liberal Party is not thinking of accepting the legacy left in Morocco by Lord Salisbury. An understanding between England and France on the subject of Morocco will remain a difficulty and will only be possible, if Tangier is kept separate from the question as a whole, and is left untouched. France could then obtain Tuat and a rectification of frontiers, whilst England would obtain a commercial Treaty, which would allow her to use the forces of her capital to exploit the country.

[1] Patenôtre's successor at Tangier.

CHAPTER XII

ITALY AND ABYSSINIA. APRIL, 1890–MARCH, 1895

[When Menelik came to the Throne of Abyssinia, after the death in battle of King John (March, 1889), the Italians, who already occupied Massawa, concluded with him the Treaty of Uccialli,[1] and in February, 1890, they occupied Adua, which had, however, soon to be given up. Italy's policy of expansion did not improve relations between herself and King Menelik.]

THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, TO COUNT ZU SOLMS-SONNENWALDE, AMBASSADOR IN ROME, *April 3rd*, 1890

Confidential.

I enclose a copy of a report of March 16th [2] from the Imperial Ambassador in London, giving the points of a confidential conversation with the Italian Ambassador there. It is for your private information.

You know that several of Count Tornielli's expressions of anxiety with regard to Italy's policy of hasty colonial expansion have been repeated in the Press. This anxiety has its connection with the policy, which England found herself obliged by circumstances to pursue in Egypt and Egypt's former Equatorial provinces. After the loss of Khartoum [3] the Egyptian Government, under pressure from England, repeatedly declared officially that there was no immediate intention to recover the lost provinces by force of arms. The British occupation was confined to holding a line in the neighbourhood of Wadi Halfa against further Mahdist aggression and to protecting the most important points on the Red Sea coast. She hopes, no doubt—and recent events in the Sudan seem to justify me in so thinking—that internal dissensions, famine and want of armaments will gradually so weaken the rebellious Sudanese that it will not be difficult later on to recover what is lost without any great expenditure of men or money. This policy would probably be thwarted, if an enterprising European Power, like Italy, not content with dominating Abyssinia, and perhaps forced thereto by attacks from the Sudanese, who

[1] Cf. G. F. H. Berkeley, *The Campaign of Adowa*, p. 18 et seq.
[2] Not given.
[3] January, 1885.

are known to be bitter enemies of the Christian Abyssinians, contemplated an extension of its sphere of interest towards the Nile territories in the West. I do not know if the Italian Government cherishes such schemes; but at any rate the present anxieties show that British circles suspect the Rome Cabinet of them or look upon them as a natural result of the developments on the Red Sea.

You know the position we take up regarding the colonial aspirations of the Italians. We ourselves have no interests in the parts where the Italian spirit of enterprise is now busy, and we wish our Allies all possible success there. If we have said on occasion that the Italian Government would do well not to engage itself too deeply in Abyssinia, we were actuated by the anxiety lest a colonial policy in this territory, which is inhabited by the most war-like of African races, would make such demands on Italy's resources, that these would in the end prove insufficient, without splitting her forces and injuring her European position. We rejoice that so far Italy's action in Abyssinia has met with success. It has also, as far as we know, been received with sympathy in England. If now anxiety is expressed lest Italian colonial policy may lead to disagreements with England, it is clearly attributable to the fear that Italian ambitions will stretch beyond Abyssinia into the once Egyptian Sudan. Perhaps you can inform me what the leading circles in Italy think about it. I should assume that even there the calmer politicians value good relations with England too highly to set British public opinion against their country by a policy of expansion into the former Egyptian provinces whose commercial value for a long time ahead is very problematical. Italy would be merely playing into the hands of France, if for the sake of these hopes she forgot her interests in the Mediterranean, the protection and development of which essentially depend on the goodwill of a Sea-Power such as England.

I beg you to use your discretion in discussing the above subjects with Signor Crispi at some chance opportunity. But you will discuss the question only from an academic point of view, and avoid anything which might look to the Minister like a piece of unsolicited advice and rub him up the wrong way.

As I expect a report on the matter, I will add that, in accordance with Count Hatzfeldt's expressed wish, the points in the enclosed despatch should be used, but no names mentioned.

VII. 353

German Note.

In April, 1890, General Count Dal Verme was sent to London by the Italian Government in order to come to an understanding with the British

Government concerning the British and Italian spheres of influence in Africa. [No agreement, however, was arrived at.]

VIII. 352

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *October 21st*, 1890

In conversation with Lord Salisbury I mentioned the newspaper reports of the alleged coming resumption of the African negotiations between England and Italy. He replied that he had announced in Rome his willingness to resume the abortive negotiations, but on condition that the point on which they had broken down should be omitted from the discussions.

Lord Salisbury added that the cession of Kassala to Italy would raise such a storm against the Cabinet (The EMPEROR: *'! ! Most of them don't know where the stupid place is ! '*) that he could not think of making this concession to the Italians. But he had raised no objection to a temporary occupation of Kassala by Italian troops. (The EMPEROR: *' Once they are in, the Italians can do as the British do with the occupation of Egypt, which is also " temporary ".'*)

German Note.

The Agreement on the delimitation of the British and Italian spheres of influence was signed on April 15th, 1891. Article II states:

Le Gouvernement italien aura la faculté, au cas où il serait obligé de le faire pour les besoins de sa situation militaire, d'occuper Kassala et la contrée attenante jusqu'à l'Atbara. (Cf. p. 159.)

VIII. 355

COUNT MÜNSTER, IN PARIS, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *May 21st*, 1891

. . . I saw my Italian colleague this morning.

General Menabrea is very dissatisfied and says that neither the negotiations about the necessary regulation of frontiers in Abyssinia between Obock and Massawa nor any commercial settlement had been successfully concluded, and nothing was to be got out of M. Ribot.

As far as Africa is concerned, the French Government's first wish was to prevent an agreement between England and Italy. The French still hoped to drive the British out of Egypt, and they did not desire to see Upper Egypt in the hands of the British and Italians. Therefore they wished to drive a wedge between the Italian possessions and Egypt. Their pretensions on that side were so large that Italy was unable to agree to them.

[Crispi returned to power in December, 1893, in succession to Marquis Rudini, who had been Prime Minister and Foreign Minister since 1891. Baron Blanc became Foreign Minister. Under him the African questions immediately resumed their importance.]

VIII. 358

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *January 30th*, 1894

Secret.

Before going away I visited the Foreign Minister,[1] who turned the conversation again on to relations with England. He knew that England could conclude no regular treaties, but would be quite content, if the Cabinets of Rome and London went *de facto* hand in hand in all questions of the Mediterranean and the East. This harmony was hampered by Massawa and by all matters connected with this Italian acquisition.

He, Baron Blanc, had always been personally opposed to the Italian colonial policy in Africa. It caused Italy to scatter her military forces and waste her finances, which were anyhow in a bad state, and exposed her to constant struggles with the natives, which might under given circumstances lead to a defeat, followed by the destruction of Italian prestige and a Government crisis. But as things were now, it was of course out of the question to evacuate Massawa. Signor Crispi would never allow it, King Humbert still less. Also too much must not be asked of Italy's nervous public opinion.

He could not at present discuss the question of suzerainty over Massawa. He would rather treat Africa as an occupation than as a conquest, and would be glad to recognise Egyptian, i.e. Turkish suzerainty over Massawa. But neither King Humbert nor the Prime Minister would ever consent to this.

He wishes, however, to make certain that Massawa no longer blocks the way for closer relations with England. Perhaps the best way to arrange it would be for Italy to promise to follow England's lead in all questions affecting the Red Sea, Sudan, etc., whilst England should take note of this and declare herself Italy's friend in the Red Sea . . . Baron Blanc said: 'L'Angleterre ne peut ni nous céder ni confirmer comme nôtres des territoires qualifiés à Constantinople et au Caire comme égyptiens. Mais elle peut prendre acte pour nous y considérer comme des amis liés à sa cause des déclarations formelles de notre part, que nous ne prendrons d'accord qu'avec elle et que nous procéderons absolument d'accord avec elle sur toute question concernant la Mer Rouge, le Soudan, etc., questions où l'intérêt supérieur de l'Angleterre à la protection de la voie des Indes et les intérêts liés à la réorganisation de l'Égypte par ses soins dominent pour nous toute la situation et sont considérés par nous comme des faits heureux pour nos intérêts nationaux.'

Baron Blanc indicated that he would be grateful if the Imperial

[1] See note, p. 163.

Ambassador in London, whose influence and skill were known to him, would sound the Cabinet of St. James's very confidentially, in order to discover whether such an agreement could be concluded by an exchange of notes. He would prefer not to charge either Count Tornielli or Sir Clare Ford with the affair at first, since the former often differed in opinion on high politics from his Chief, and the second showed no particular interest in them.

I replied to Baron Blanc that I could not judge whether Count Hatzfeldt would be able to mediate in this affair, but I encouraged the Foreign Minister in his determination to cling to England as closely as possible.

German Note.

The above was forwarded to Hatzfeldt on February 4th for his information only. There is no reply from him to be found in the Records.

VIII. 360

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *February 16th*, 1894

Cipher telegram.

Baron Blanc informed me that Major Count San Miniatelli, who formerly accompanied the British Egyptian Expeditions, started for Cairo to-day 'afin de se mettre en communication avec Lord Cromer [1] et le Sirdar Kitchener [2] pour tout ce qui peut intéresser la défense commune de l'Angleterre et de l'Italie vis-à-vis des Derviches'. . . .

VIII. 362

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *April 24th*, 1894

Cipher.

Baron Blanc informed me confidentially that Major San Miniatelli's Mission is expected to return from Cairo in the next few days to Rome. Although Lord Cromer had at first been slow in meeting them, an understanding in principle was at length arrived at. The season being advanced, and the British not eager for action, the idea of an early combined advance against the Dervishes was given up. But supposing in future military action should be found to be necessary, it would be taken in common. The Foreign Minister also informed me that Signor Silvestrelli, whom he had sent on a Mission to London, had worked with equal success there. After long negotiations Italy and England had agreed upon a number of disputed or unresolved colonial

[1] Lord Cromer, formerly Sir Evelyn Baring, British Diplomatic Agent and Consul-General in Cairo.

[2] General Herbert Kitchener, Chief of the Anglo-Egyptian General Staff in Cairo.

questions. The Convention is as good as completed and will soon be signed here by Signor Crispi and the British Ambassador, Lord [*sic*] Clare Ford.

Baron Blanc hopes that the readiness which the Cabinet of St. James's had shown to meet them in North-East Africa, has not only removed the danger of differences in the future between Italy and England, but has also furthered the general solidarity of interests between the two countries.

German Note.

The Agreement for the determination of the boundaries of the British and Italian spheres of influence in East Africa was signed on May 5th, 1894. Baron Blanc told Bülow (report of May 20th) that besides the treaty of May 5th England had made a secret Agreement with Italy about Harrar, by which England was granted the right ' d'exercer son action à Harrar et de regarder Harrar comme appartenant à sa sphère, tant que l'Italie ne croira pas devoir étendre son influence à ce territoire.' According to this, the general impression that under the original Agreement Harrar was to be included in the Italian sphere was not quite correct. Italy indeed was to be allowed the right to extend her influence into Harrar at any time. Reason enough to make comprehensible the Italian wish to publish the secret Harrar Agreement.

[General Baratieri captured Kassala on July 17th, 1894. There was already in force an Agreement with Great Britain (April 15th, 1891) by which the Italians engaged to transfer Kassala, supposing they ever occupied it, to the Egyptian Government, as soon as the latter should have restored order in the Sudan. (Cf. p. 156.)]

Comment by Baron Blanc.

La prise de Kassala serait de peu d'importance politique, si ce n'était qu'un territoire annexé à la Colonie Erythréenne. Le grand avantage pour l'Italie est de devenir co-occupante de territoires égyptiens avec les Anglais, en sorte qu'une dislocation de troupes entre Kassala, Wadi Halfa et le Caire est une affaire entre les États-Majors des deux pays. Ce serait une base d'alliance anglo-italienne et de garantie commune de la Méditerranée.

VIII. 373

Bernhard von Bülow, in Rome, to the Chancellor, Count von Caprivi, *June 21st*, 1894

Extract.

It is the nature of Baron Blanc, who is both doctrinaire and passionate in character, to exaggerate every tendency. He was therefore too much governed in his colonial policy by the idea of placing England under obligations to himself in Africa, so as to bind her to Italy and bring her into opposition to France. His sending Major San Miniatelli to Cairo and his conduct of the negotiations in London, which led to the Anglo-Italian Protocol of May 5th, were, he said to me, done with the direct object ' de nouer l'Angleterre de telle façon à l'Italie que la France ne pourrait plus les séparer '.

With the help of the pointed arguments contained in the Harrar Despatch of June 15th [1]—the Triple Alliance to hold together even against England, so that France shall not be under the impression that the Triple Alliance is being weakened and show herself even more reckless towards Italy in the Mediterranean—I hope I have convinced Baron Blanc that until further notice it is not to Italy's interests, from a doctrinaire adhesion to general principles, to say yes and amen to every British aggression or to consent to play England's game against us. It is more difficult for me than for Baron Blanc to prevent Signor Crispi from slipping back into the old habit of turning first to London in all questions affecting the Mediterranean and Africa. How long this will be successful depends on whether matters in Morocco and Tripoli do not come too violently to a head, and whether the French claims on those countries do not become too obvious. . . .

German Note.

The German Ambassador in Rome reported by telegram on January 2nd that Baron Blanc feared an Abyssinian attack on Eritrea, prepared with French assistance.

VIII. 375

THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, TO BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, *January 3rd*, 1895

Telegram.

That France can have done anything rash, i.e. inculpating, in Abyssinia I do not believe, but I hope that General Baratieri is estimating his power of military action as accurately as he has hitherto. The less clear the situation is on the Sudan border, all the more necessary is continued good feeling between England and Italy. I shall try to influence London in this sense also. Will you also inform Baron Blanc very confidentially that the new *Times* Correspondent in Cairo, Mr. (Valentine) Chirol,[2] formerly a Diplomat, is a very important personage. He was here of late years, and on his departure expressed his firm intention of helping on the Anglo-Italian intimacy to the best of his ability. His influence in London is strong enough to neutralise in certain definite cases even that of Lord Cromer. A moment may arrive when this may be important, for Lord Cromer, who considers Egypt's financial interests before everything else, is opposed on principle to any policy involving military action.

The Italian Representative in Egypt will do well to place himself on a footing of mutual confidence with Mr. Chirol, whose tact and discretion may be reckoned on with certainty.

[1] Not given.

[2] Cf. Sir Valentine Chirol's *Fifty Years in a Changing World*, p. 289.

VIII. 380

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, *January 8th*, 1895

You informed me recently of Baron Blanc's views on England's Abyssinian policy.

He is not alone in thinking that the British Cabinet might do more than it does. No doubt a less feeble Government than that of Lord Rosebery would have behaved differently in respect of the Harrar Agreement. But Baron Blanc will hardly make co-operation with the Italians more pleasing to the British, if he proposes the nostrum of a mixed Anglo-Italian occupation of Zeyla, i.e., really to govern it by a joint control.

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 12th*, 1895

Cipher telegram.

During a long conversation which I have just had with Lord Kimberley, England's relations with Italy came under discussion. He described them as thoroughly cordial. I indicated that the Italians had expected more support of their interests in North Africa from their British friends. The Minister was quite ready to discuss it, and said frankly that he was sure England would be at Italy's side if it came to pass that Italy's vital interests in the *Mediterranean*, which were also England's, were seriously threatened. Italy must be content with this, and must not expect England in the meantime to share in aggressive action by Italy in Africa, even against the Sudan, thereby getting into conflict with other Powers. I replied that perhaps the Italians did not expect help for aggressive action, but only against attacks by others, e.g., Abyssinia. The Minister remained silent, and obviously meant me to recognise that even in this case England could not help Italy.

VIII. 385

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, *January 24th*, 1895

Count Hatzfeldt telegraphed yesterday:

'Lord Rosebery was quite ready for a discussion, and I found him on the whole very willing to do something to help the present Italian Government and to keep Italy's friendship. But he has misunderstood the last report from Rome, or else Sir Clare Ford has reported the expressions of the Italian Minister wrongly, for Lord Rosebery took it to mean that Italy was demanding co-operation by Egyptian troops to make a diversion against the Dervishes. This he said was difficult in consideration of the Egyptian Government, which could not be ignored. I replied that my

impression was that the Italian Government would probably be content with some agreement, as evidence of the community of interests, e.g. permission for Italian troops to pass through to Harrar.

'The Italian Chargé d'Affaires is to speak to Lord Kimberley to-day and hand him a very confidential Memorandum.'

Nothing was said about Zeyla to the Imperial Ambassador. He does not seem to have touched on this, or hardly at all, with proper realisation of its difficulties. From his latest communications it appears that the British Government is now really ready to meet the Italian one, perhaps as a result of our representations.

As regards British action against the Dervishes, I again mention Mr. Chirol, who spoke, at least whilst he was here, strongly in favour of an active Sudan policy in combination with Italy. But he should not be alarmed by too much insistence.

VIII. 393

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *March 25th*, 1895

Cipher.

Lord Kimberley a few days ago informed the Italian Ambassador, who was enquiring about the state of affairs, that the Indian Government had declared decidedly against admitting an Italian Agent to reside at Zeyla, and that, although he wished to give no definite answer, the British Government could, in face of this, hardly grant permission.

General Ferrero, who was much disturbed at the definite rejection of the Italian wishes, which had been reduced to the most modest proportions, begged me earnestly to speak again to Lord Kimberley. This I did, but unfortunately with little success. The Minister replied that the Indian Government would have nothing to say to it, because the French were sure at once to demand the admission of a French Agent, which must be avoided at all costs. With much trouble I induced Lord Kimberley to promise to come to no definite decision, without first speaking to the Prime Minister, whose illness has so far prevented him from hearing of the Indian Government's refusal.

General Ferrero, who does not wish to report Lord Kimberley's statement to Rome at present, expressed in his excitement a few days ago his intention, supposing it was definitely rejected, of getting up a sort of protest in Rome against the action of the British Government, and hinted that a less friendly attitude on Italy's part, particularly in regard to Egypt, would be unpleasant for England.

[See the chapter on the Dongola Campaign, undertaken by the British, partly in order to relieve the Italians from pressure by the Dervishes.]

CHAPTER XIII

ITALY AND THE MEDITERRANEAN, JULY TO SEPTEMBER, 1892

German Note.

The English Parliamentary Election of July, 1892, resulted in a Liberal majority. Nevertheless, Lord Salisbury's Government remained in office until the middle of August. It was not till August 16th that Gladstone's new Cabinet was formed, with the Earl of Rosebery as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Marquis of Ripon as Colonial Secretary.

BARON VON ROTENHAN, GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *July 18th*, 1892

Telegram.

The Imperial Chancellor requests you to draw up as soon as possible a reasoned report of how far the now evident result of the English Election will probably affect England's continental policy. The above with special reference to her attitude towards Italy and Turkey. You may perhaps be able to obtain Lord Salisbury's views.

VIII. 75

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 19th*, 1892

Cipher telegram.

The new Cabinet will very likely not all be in agreement as to its continental policy, which will depend mainly on the personality of the Foreign Minister. At present there is uncertainty whether Lord Rosebery will take this post, and not Lord Kimberley, who approves of Lord Salisbury's foreign policy much less than the other, and would also be less independent of Gladstone.

Lord Salisbury himself thinks (and I agree with him) that Gladstone will show greater friendliness towards France. He fears especially that Gladstone will pronounce decidedly for England's non-intervention in favour of Italy and will so discourage her in her dealings with France. Added to this, Mr. Morley wishes to insist on the evacuation of Egypt, because England is pledged to it, whilst Lord Rosebery is decidedly against that.[1]

[1] Cf. Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, Vol. III, pp. 414, 495, 561. Also *Letters of the Empress Frederick*, p. 437.

It will not be possible to form a definite opinion on England's probable foreign policy, until it is certain whether Lord Rosebery, who is away at present, will accept office, and whether, if so, he will be allowed by his colleagues the greater independence in dealing with foreign affairs which he is said to claim. Many of his friends, including the Rothschilds, are advising him not to wear himself out.

VIII. 76

MEMORANDUM BY RASCHDAU OF THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 20th*, 1892

The Influence of the English General Election on the Foreign Policy of the Country.

As far as a judgment of the future can be gathered from the antecedents of the individuals about to come into power and from their utterances during the Election, as also from the attitude of the Press organs of the former Opposition, it is possible to form an approximate picture of the foreign policy soon to be followed. Up to the last moment there was complete satisfaction in England at Lord Salisbury's policy, and even Gladstone's last Election speeches cast no aspersion on it. On the contrary, he tried to claim for himself what was good in it and to point out that its origin lay in the former (Liberal) period. For the rest, no action by the Conservatives has been more severely condemned in the Liberal Press. From this it can be assumed with some certainty that no violent change in the treatment of this or that question will come to pass at first. But since in diplomacy the form is often more important than the substance, the treatment of affairs will probably very soon undergo a change, brought about by certain likes and dislikes of the Party in power and certain theological and moral tendencies in its Leader. Perhaps Gladstone's age and his concentration on domestic affairs may make this influence less felt than it was in his last term of office, and if Lord Rosebery undertakes the direction of Foreign business, the latter may be in a better position to continue in the same direction as hitherto. If another is at the head, we must reserve judgment until we know more of his antecedents.

But if we are to assume that the course will in the main be unaltered, we must above all bear in mind that in the Party coming into power there are more Francophils than in the Conservative Party. Dilke, Labouchere, Gladstone himself, and the Irish, lean more towards France than Germany. This will not prevent their following an independent path in questions that affect British interests, besides which the preferences of individual leaders will not be altogether without influence. There is no need

to go as far as Lord Salisbury in assuming that Gladstone will declare for withholding *all* intervention in Italy's favour.[1] The destruction of Italy's position in the Mediterranean would be a severe blow for England, and in all probability public opinion would insist on intervention sooner or later. The words of the outgoing Minister may be rather taken as a personal *captatio benevolentiae*.

It is probable, at any rate, that, whoever the Foreign Minister may be, under Gladstone's leadership the desire for action will be much less to the fore than under Salisbury's. The years 1884–86 point to this prediction. This probability is in itself a factor, with which we must reckon, seeing that other Powers, France and Russia in fact, will henceforward be guided in their actions by the diminished fear of England's interference. This is perhaps the worst side of the result of the Election. Even those who profess Gladstonianism in domestic questions, admit that his former terms of office exhibit a succession of bad mistakes due to his weakness and hesitancy. I recall (in his last term alone) the failure to relieve Gordon Pacha, the Colonial dispute with Germany, the rejection of the Anglo-Portuguese Congo Treaty and England's consequent isolation, the failure of the Egyptian Finance Commission, and the diplomatic defeat in Afghanistan.

These and similar facts seem to offer the best data for speculation regarding the future development of Gladstone's Ministry, especially so long as it is not settled who is to be Foreign Minister.

There is first once more the Afghanistan question, which seems likely to occupy the British immediately. The Emir is using most hostile language against the Viceroy, who refuses to allow him to advance Eastwards. The country is extremely disturbed, and news comes of Russian aggressions at Pendjdeh in the North-West, which place was once the chief cause of Gladstone's unpopularity and his fall.[2] It would not be surprising if, with Gladstone in office, the Indian Viceroy's firm tone may become more compliant, and Russia be more aggressive. In 1885 it was Salisbury's greater determination that produced a more or less tolerable solution of a mismanaged situation.

Gladstone's Eastern policy was no less weak and hesitating. Egypt occupied the attention of his last Cabinet nearly all the time. It is not very clear what finally were the Minister's intentions on this question. He found very serious opposition in Germany, who had drawn nearer to France and was conducting a

[1] Cf. p. 163.

[2] Cf. Vol. I, p. 197. [Irish Home Rule was the main cause of the Liberal defeat.]

stiff correspondence with England regarding the new Colonial acquisitions.[1] Our policy at that time proves the high value of our prerogatives in Egypt (which still exist) in face of a hostile British Cabinet. We then met every mark of British ill-will by some lack of compliance in the matter of Egypt, and we shall be able under given circumstances to enforce our wishes there again. For Egypt is still an open question no less than then. In spite of all the scruples which may influence Gladstone and Morley, it is hardly conceivable that the former will give up or even neutralise Egypt, i.e., do anything to upset the British domination there. If he did, it would mean the end of his career. Lord Rosebery has certainly no intention of giving up Egypt.[2]

As regards the East, the opinion is constantly expressed in the Liberal camp that it is not England's business to keep a watch on Russia there. This task should be left exclusively to the central Powers. They hope thus to turn Russia's attention away from Central Asia and India. It is on this point that the two ruling parties in the State differ most widely. Disraeli's comprehensive policy, which aimed at bringing the whole of Asia Minor into England's sphere of protection, is still indeed held by the Conservative statesmen in theory, but in practice their attention is confined to the question of the Straits. Now, however, the 'unspeakable Turk' can expect but little sympathy from Gladstone.

The position of the Gladstonians with regard to Russia is closely connected with the above. They would like to be on good terms with this country—even perhaps at the price of certain indemnifications in Turkey, if the menace to India could thus be removed. Gladstone's relations towards Madame de Novikoff, his flirtations with the Orthodox Church, are well known. Only lately his followers asked him definite questions about the Jewish persecutions, and he was forced to make some severe remarks on Russia. Gladstone's policy will always be influenced by questions of morals and temperament. In any case we shall do best to be as reserved as possible with him where Russia is concerned.

As regards Italy, the Gladstone régime will probably interfere less than Salisbury in matters such as Tunis and Biserta, but, as I stated above, it is hardly to be expected that on this account there will be a renunciation of the interest that the Liberal Party took in the Peninsula long before the establishment of Italian unity.

To return to the French connection,—if a conflict could be localised in Europe to-day, we should have to count less than in 1870 on any benevolent neutrality on England's part against

[1] Cf. Vol. I, p. 131. [2] Cf. S. H. Jeyes's *Lord Rosebery*, p. 143.

France or Russia—rather the opposite. The corrective would, however, have to be sought in the comparative weakness of the Party in power and in public opinion, which in such cases expresses itself strongly.

A word about Morocco will now be in place. On this question Salisbury's attitude appears doubtful, to say the least. That busybody, the Minister,[1] is allowed to act just as he pleases and quite chauvinistically, and to criticise freely. He would probably endorse any advantage—whatever the consequences might be later. But it is not likely that Gladstone will work for territorial gain there. The man who would like to let Egypt go, if he could, who said ' hands off ' about Bosnia, and gave back its independence to the Transvaal, is not going to seize foreign territory, unless he is absolutely forced to. This perhaps would furnish a corrective to Smith's action, which is designed to force matters on—including the partition of Morocco with France.

To sum up—if, as I wrote above, there is no real alteration in the theoretic basis of British foreign policy, the executive will not improbably exhibit a kind of hypocritical tendency, which will encourage the bold ones amongst England's rivals. Hence we may look on it as fortunate that the new Ministry comes at a time when Russia is least capable of taking action.

VIII. 80

Count Hatzfeldt, at Cowes, to the German Foreign Office, *August 4th*, 1892

Secret.

In a very confidential conversation with Lord Salisbury I asked whether he had yet initiated Lord Rosebery into the secret Agreement with Italy, or whether he meant to do so. He replied at once that Lord Rosebery (whose appointment is even now not quite certain) would at any rate find the Agreement in question in the Foreign Office Archives. When I went further into the question, he stated firmly that he meant to explain it to Lord Rosebery and to urge him to carry on with his, Lord Salisbury's Italian policy. The Prime Minister added that in his eyes the attitude towards Italy, which he considered more important than the Eastern question, was the key to the whole of foreign policy, for any departure from it would mean a change in the grouping of the Powers, which would be unwelcome to England.

He means to speak in this sense to Lord Rosebery, if the latter takes Office and gives him the opportunity of speaking.

[1] Sir Charles Euan Smith.

VIII. 80–1

COUNT ZU SOLMS-SONNENWALDE, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *August 18th*, 1892

Very confidential.

At to-day's diplomatic reception Signor Brin [1] again discussed with me the situation in England. The Minister had still not yet received any official confirmation of Lord Rosebery's appointment as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I said that I welcomed this appointment and hoped that the newspaper report was true. I took it as a sign that British foreign policy was about to follow the same course as before in most essentials. The decision had certainly taken rather a long time.

Signor Brin answered that he was all the more pleased at the news, because Count Tornielli's reports had caused him to fear that Lord Rosebery would not take Office. Count Tornielli must be suffering from indigestion, his reports were so pessimistic, that after reading them everything looked black. He added: 'I will speak now not as a Minister. Count Tornielli is obsessed with the idea that for a long time past England has no longer been the Old England, and that she only thinks of her own advantage; she is very much afraid of France and will never fight against her; and anyone depending on England is building on sand.'

Signor Brin went on to say that in certain respects Count Tornielli was perhaps not altogether wrong. Palmerston's England was different from Salisbury's, for the latter always held back from nervousness. Nevertheless Count Tornielli exaggerated the dangers. England certainly would not turn against the Triple Alliance. She needed the Triple Alliance much more than the Triple Alliance needed her. If England turned from the Triple Alliance Powers, they had only to come to an understanding with Russia, in order to shatter England's influence in the East.

I replied to the Minister that to-day England had to contend with difficulties at home, which did not exist in Palmerston's time, and the development of steam for naval purposes had diminished England's former superiority at sea. But I was convinced that she might well recover her old energy, if her position as a Power was really threatened. Count Tornielli had said: 'England will never fight against France,' but there was no question of this at present. There were many degrees between alliance and war. No man required England to declare war against France immediately. But she could do us a great service now by taking up a position which would leave France in uncertainty as

[1] Foreign Minister in Giolitti's Cabinet since May, 1892.

to whether she would at some time see England on the side of her enemies.

It was Italy's task to hold England to the Triple Alliance, and to convince her that the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean is quite as vital to her as to Italy.

The Minister answered that Lord Vivian [1] had repeatedly told him that if Italy attacked France, public opinion in England would scarcely permit active support of Italy, but that if Italy were attacked by France she could certainly count on immediate assistance from England.

Signor Brin had replied to the Ambassador: 'If only that is true! Since Italy will certainly not declare war on France, peace is assured on this side; so if we are assured of England's support, we can look with comfort on the future.'

The Minister does not consider the situation entirely without danger. His impression is that since the Election in England French self-confidence has increased. He gets this idea from the French Press and from some recent speeches.

VIII. 82–3

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *September 6th*, 1892

Very secret.

Lord Rosebery took the initiative in discussing with me very confidentially Anglo-Italian relations and remarked that he had not yet read the text of Lord Salisbury's secret Agreement with the Italian Government.

He clearly wishes to re-assure the Italians to the utmost, but he considered that, failing the certainty of discretion in Rome, a written assurance was too dangerous, first because he was not yet sure of the consent of some of his colleagues, which for such a step he could not dispense with, and also because he personally must be prepared during the next Session for questions by Labouchere and the rest of the Radicals on whatever engagements he might have with Italy. But if the state of things here were understood in Italy, there would be no need for anxiety on her part, even without a written assurance.

Mr. Gladstone was old, and his dominating influence in the Cabinet was not what it was, whilst he, Lord Rosebery, could assure me without exaggeration that he was now almost indispensable to the inherently weak Ministry, and was therefore much stronger than formerly. Added to this was the fact that any Government, even Gladstone's, was bound to help Italy in the event of an attack.

[1] Ambassador in Rome since December, 1891.

I replied that I knew that a fresh assurance in *writing* was not asked for in Rome at present, and that, apart from Mr Gladstone's former statements in the Press, the anxiety in Rome had been caused especially by the fact that he, Lord Rosebery, had made no statement of his views either in Rome or to Count Tornielli up to the present. If he wished it, I should naturally not fail to report his words to me in Berlin, whence perhaps they would come to the knowledge of our representative in Rome.

German Note.

Count Hatzfeldt refers above to a letter written by Gladstone to the owner of the *Corriere di Napoli* and published in that paper. It complains of Italy's ' enormous military expenditure and its embarrassing alliances ', and continues : ' I cannot like the Triple or the Double Alliances, because the ultimate design and scope of these alliances is not a peaceful one.' [Both quotations English in text.] Count Hatzfeldt (September 1st, 1892) recalls an article in the *Contemporary Review* of October, 1889, which was universally ascribed to Gladstone, but which really originated with Labouchere. The article was a hostile criticism of England's and Italy's relations with the Triple Alliance.

Lord Rosebery rejected the suggestion made by me, that he might tell Count Tornielli what he had told me, clearly because he does not find the Count's personality sympathetic, but he agreed readily to my communicating his words to Berlin in strict confidence and to their being eventually passed on to Rome. I remarked that each word was of the greatest importance, and I should therefore require to set down in writing in his presence the text of his statement, if he would not do it himself. He promised before his coming departure for Balmoral to give me a written memorandum to pass on to Berlin as an oral communication.

Until this arrives I urge that the above report be kept secret and not yet passed on to Rome. The slightest indiscretion there or any communication to Count Tornielli might destroy once again Lord Rosebery's remarkable trust in myself and rob me of the power of influencing him in confidence.

VIII. 84

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *September 7th*, 1892

Secret.

Later in our very confidential conversation Sir Philip Currie [1] again referred to Lord Salisbury's secret Agreement with Italy and tried to show that the Italian Government had no grounds for doubting the continued validity of the Agreement, so long as the British Government now in Power abstained from declaring its refusal to be bound by it. Without overstraining the practical

[1] Permanent Under-Secretary to the Foreign Office.

significance of this argument, I consider that the Italian Government would do well to attach a certain importance to it, as long as Lord Rosebery remains in Office, for it is scarcely to be feared that he would consent definitely to withdraw the agreements concluded by Lord Salisbury.

Postscript.

The Under-Secretary has just read to me a memorandum by Lord Rosebery on his conversation with me, and begged me to take a copy of the last part,[1] which gives his statements and personal views on the subject of Italy, and to treat it as orally delivered. I was first, however, obliged to take exception to certain points, and above all to one passage, the approximate sense of which is that public opinion and the interests of England would require the support of Italy in the event of a 'groundless' attack being made on her, England. We finally agreed that Sir Philip Currie should include in the bag that goes to Lord Rosebery to-day at Balmoral the draft of an alteration running more or less as follows: Lord Rosebery can issue no declaration without consulting his colleagues, who might perhaps not agree with it. It is his personal opinion, however, that Italy need have no reason for anxiety, since both the feeling of public opinion and the well-understood interests of England would agree in supporting Italy in the event of her being attacked.

Sir Philip Currie is to request Lord Rosebery to telegraph to him his consent to the above. As soon as the text is finally settled, I shall send it to Berlin by the Imperial messenger, if by then I can find no surer method of transmitting it.

Lord Rosebery has agreed to my eventually communicating our conversations confidentially to Count Tornielli.

VIII. 85

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *September 7th*, 1892

Secret.

From my detailed and very confidential conversation with Lord Rosebery on the subject of Italy, I received the impression (which has since been strengthened) that he honestly desires to reassure Italy as much as possible as to his intentions, and that the reserve and caution, which he imposes on himself, is made necessary solely by his not ill-founded anxiety lest the slightest indiscretion might involve him in difficulties with his colleagues. If these difficulties could not be overcome by the time Parliament reassembles, they would give rise to attacks, which might be fatal to the Cabinet or to his own position.

[1] Cf. p. 175.

In my humble opinion it cannot be denied that there is a foundation for these anxieties. However indispensable Lord Rosebery may be to Mr. Gladstone to-day, he would nevertheless not be in a position now to give Italy assurances of military support in the event of an attack, without submitting so vital a question of policy to the Prime Minister. Even if the latter approved of it in general, he would first have to lay it before the Cabinet. It appears hardly a matter of doubt that certain parties in the Cabinet would raise serious objections against undertaking any engagements which could result in Lord Rosebery's retirement from Office ; this would certainly not be wished for by Italy.

On the other hand it is an open secret that Mr. Labouchere, who is extremely indignant at his exclusion from the Cabinet and even more so at the inclusion of Lord Rosebery, whom he has publicly called Lord Salisbury's representative in the Cabinet, is only waiting for an opportunity to attack the Government's foreign policy. The assumption of far-reaching engagements regarding Italy would give him the handle he is looking for and secure for his attacks the support of the other Radicals. Sir Charles Dilke, who is very dangerous as an opponent in Parliament, would undoubtedly join him, for he is anxious at all costs again to play a part in the public eye and is already set up by the Radicals as an authority on Foreign Affairs in opposition to Lord Rosebery. Thus there is always the danger that a discussion in Parliament on Italian engagements might bring on a crisis, if it cannot be denied that they exist. Any solution involving Lord Rosebery's retirement would be so much less to the interests of Italy, since his successor in Office would in such circumstances be pledged to a policy of reserve regarding Italy.

German Note.

The next paragraph refers to the visit of the King and Queen of Italy to the Court of Berlin (June 23rd, 1892). Brin, the Foreign Minister, accompanied them and held conversations with the Chancellor and Count Hatzfeldt, who was in Berlin at the time. After his return home Signor Brin told Count Solms of his Berlin impressions. (Solm's report of July 11th.) 'It must seem wonderful, and the world cannot be thankful enough that a young and active Monarch, a soldier through and through, who sees himself at the head of the finest and best prepared Army in the world, yet resists the temptation to make use of his power to earn laurels. Instead of this, he makes it his task and his glory to keep peace in the world.' To this the Emperor William appended a marginal note : 'I should then be merely a Condottiere, and not an Emperor of the House of Hohenzollern.'

This condition of affairs is, in my humble opinion, confirmed by what I was able to explain to the Italian Minister, Brin, in Berlin, namely, that for Italy everything here depends on the appointment of Lord Rosebery. I think I may regard this view

as correct also to-day, even if Lord Rosebery is not at the moment in a position to renew any definite assurances, and if his words merely lead to the conclusion that he himself holds with Lord Salisbury's point of view and believes that he will sooner or later be able to translate them into action. At present, if I am not mistaken, the general political situation does not lead one to expect any disturbance of the peace, which might make the question of British support a burning one for the Italian Government. It is also far from impossible that, as the Conservatives expect, next spring there may be another change of Government.

I think I should mention here that Count Tornielli continues to enquire of me whether Lord Rosebery will be able to continue in Office in the case of open opposition in the Cabinet. Though it is impossible to form an opinion for oneself, my humble opinion is that in Rome they may be satisfied with Lord Rosebery's assurance to me, that he feels himself strong and does not fear inconvenient interference by Mr. Gladstone with his handling of foreign policy. But if he really has to contend with opposition on the part of some of his colleagues, it will be all the more to Italy's interest to avoid anything that may increase this opposition and destroy Lord Rosebery's position.

VIII. 87–8

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *September 11th*, 1892

Secret.

The Under-Secretary of State informed me confidentially yesterday that he had received a private letter from Lord Rosebery in Scotland to say that for various reasons he could not approve of the text of his statement to me respecting Italy, as proposed by him, Sir Philip Currie, and he therefore considered it necessary to retain his original draft.

According to Sir Philip's very confidential statement, Lord Rosebery seems to have made it very plain in his letter to him that especial attention must be paid to the British nation's very conspicuous *love of peace*, and that everything must be avoided that may lead to the charge later that the British Cabinet is furthering or making easy war-like complications in Europe. Also, with reference to the Under-Secretary's proposal to cut out the word 'groundless', because it might arouse suspicions in Rome, and because, in the event of an actual attack by France on Italy, a lengthy enquiry into the question, then still undetermined, as to whether the attack was 'groundless', might prevent the help for Italy arriving in time—Lord Rosebery replied that if public opinion was then in favour of helping Italy and made it

possible for the Government to act in this sense, there would be no fear of delay in taking the requisite measures.

The Under-Secretary's very confidential comment was that, as I knew, Lord Rosebery's position was an extremely difficult one and demanded from him the greatest caution. After I had gone thoroughly into the matter with Lord Rosebery and heard his views on the situation, I should find it easy, when communicating the enclosure, to add my explanations, and so lay to rest any scruples that might be felt in Rome regarding the statements contained in it. Later also, when the situation was less obscure and the Minister's position became better established, I should find an opportunity to refer to the question again with him and draw from him declarations more extensive than the Minister now thought either permissible or prudent to offer in a more or less definite written document.

I am enclosing Your Excellency a copy of the Memorandum in question, and I think that I should explain the situation by saying that this gives only the closing paragraph of a Promemoria prepared by Lord Rosebery on the whole of his conversation with me solely for the Foreign Office Archives.

I must add in strict confidence that the enclosure does not give Lord Rosebery's remarks to me quite correctly, as is made clear from his renewed anxiety in drawing up the document. In our conversation there was no word of a 'groundless' attack, but merely of an attack of any sort. Moreover, Lord Rosebery was not speaking personally as a private man, as might almost be gathered from the enclosure, but as a Minister. This is shown by the fact that he was at pains to prove that he is indispensable to the Cabinet and will, as far as can be foreseen, be able to translate his views into action.

However this may be, and although the enclosed text may contain no engagement, which can be quoted in Rome as an unconditional guarantee for British assistance, I think that when they consider the situation here and the caution imposed on Lord Rosebery by the difficulties of his position, they cannot fail to realise that at heart he shares his predecessor's views on Italy and desires to reassure the Italian Government as far as is possible, without now endangering his whole position.

From my own conviction I can declare that, as things are here at present, I should not have thought it possible yet to obtain from Lord Rosebery and in a more or less written form, a statement so far-reaching of his policy in Italy's favour, even though not formally binding. I have no doubt that if his statement, general though it is, came to the knowledge of his colleagues, it would expose him to attacks and difficulties, which might lead to his retirement.

Enclosure.
Copy.[1]

My personal view was this, but it must be held to be nothing more, that in the event of France groundlessly attacking Italy, the interests of England as a Mediterranean and Indian Power would bring her naturally to the rescue of Italy, while her sympathy as having so long and ardently co-operated in the cause of Italian freedom would lead her in the same direction. That was my personal conviction, but beyond that I could say nothing, and in any case I could not make an authoritative communication as from the British Cabinet to the Italian Government. My belief was simply this, that in the eventuality that was dreaded and contemplated the natural force of things would bring about the defensive co-operation they desired.

VIII. 90

COUNT ZU SOLMS-SONNENWALDE, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *September 26th*, 1892

Secret.

I could only fulfil Your Excellency's order to inform the Italian Government of the Imperial Ambassador's conversations with Lord Rosebery in London on the subject of Anglo-Italian relations, by speaking to Signor Malvano, since Signor Brin was absent.

Yesterday, however, I discussed the affair with Signor Brin. I made full use of all the parts of Count Hatzfeldt's reports, which you sent me,[2] contributing to put Lord Rosebery's good intentions in the right light and to convince Signor Brin that Lord Rosebery had gone as far in his declarations as present circumstances would permit; that the Italian Government would have to be content with that for the present, and should not, by demanding further declarations, which were moreover unnecessary in the present political situation, prejudice or indeed endanger his position, which will gradually become stronger.

I had feared that the phrase 'in the event of a groundless attack' might have a depressing effect on Signor Brin; but having observed that neither Signor Malvano nor Signor Brin noticed it, I abstained from calling particular attention to it and passed over in silence Count Hatzfeldt's discussion of the 'groundless attacks', a phrase whose special importance is due to Lord Rosebery's determination to leave it unaltered.

Signor Brin said that evidently no more was to be expected from Lord Rosebery. England was always reserved, and Lord Salisbury had really never made any very binding declara-

[1] English in text.

[2] Cf. pp. 170–175.

tion.[1] They must wait for what England would do in a given case.

For Italy it was only important to discover whether she could count on England against a French attack under all circumstances. Lord Vivian had asked him whether Italy would move against France in a Franco-German war, and he, Brin, had replied that, if France attacked Germany, Italy would naturally go to Germany's assistance. He had then asked Lord Vivian whether Italy could count on England's help if she were involved in this way in a war with France, and was told that in that case it was very questionable whether public opinion in England would allow it.

The Minister then added: 'It is of the first importance for me to be clear on this point.'

[1] Cf. p. 95.

CHAPTER XIV

MR. GLADSTONE'S GOVERNMENT AND EGYPT, 1892–3

[The reforms in Egyptian administration and finance, etc., which Sir Evelyn Baring (afterwards Earl of Cromer) and his officials introduced and made effective, were aided by the co-operation of the Khedive Tewfik and his Minister, Mustapha Fehmi Pacha, who maintained cordial relations with the British administrators. But when Tewfik died in January, 1892, his successor, Abbas Hilmi, dismissed Mustapha Fehmi without consulting the British advisers and appointed Fakhri Pacha. This appointment was meant as an act of defiance, the Khedive's intention being to restore that personal rule of the Turkish Viceroys which had been the ruin of the country.

According to a report from Count Leyden, German Consul-General (January 17th, 1892), the change of Ministers was brought about by the French and Russian representatives with the help of the Turkish High Commissioner, Mukhdar Pacha. On this the British Government insisted on the appointment of the Francophil Minister, Fakhri, being cancelled.[1] At first the Khedive refused to give way, but on the 18th he suddenly submitted, replaced Fakhri by Riaz Pacha, and gave engagements for the future, as demanded by England.

It was some time before Abbas gave up his hopes of shaking off British control, and he secretly encouraged anti-British agitation. Gradually, however, he came to realise that such courses involved dangers for himself and his throne, and his opposition to Sir E. Baring ceased. Cf. Lord Cromer, *Abbas Pasha*, 1915.]

VIII. 182

German Note.

Early in August, 1892, Lord Salisbury's Government fell and was succeeded by Mr. Gladstone's Liberal Ministry, with Lord Rosebery as Foreign Secretary. . . .

In the middle of July Lord Salisbury remarked to Count Metternich, the German Chargé d'Affaires—thereby agreeing with Raschdau's prophecy—that the Sultan would be making a terrible mistake, if he expected any special concessions from Gladstone in the Egyptian question. Public opinion, including the Liberal, would never again allow Egypt to be left to its fate or anything at all to happen that could injure British interests on the Nile, even if Mr. Gladstone personally wished it. (Report by Metternich, July 13th, 1892.) When Dilke asked in the House of Commons on May 1st, 1893, whether the time for thinking of evacuating Egypt had not

[1] Cf. p. 181.

arrived, Gladstone actually expressed a view quite different from that given during the Election campaign of July, 1892. He still held that England would not be justified in remaining in Egypt indefinitely, but he refused utterly to name a date for preparing to evacuate. In fact he declared straight out that evacuation was not thinkable within any calculable period.

German Note.

Prince Henry VIII of Reuss reported from Vienna on September 26th, 1892, that Count Kalnoky had informed him of the Austro-Hungarian Government's readiness to support the Sultan's wishes on the Egyptian question with the British Government, but had said that this was not the moment for bringing pressure.

VIII. 183

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO PRINCE HENRY VII OF REUSS, IN VIENNA, *October 11th*, 1892

. . . I beg you not to begin yourself a discussion of the Egyptian question with Count Kalnoky. But should he take occasion to mention the matter again, please indicate that we have always advised the Sultan to maintain a friendly attitude towards England and in particular to arrive at an understanding with her regarding Egypt ; also that we have always made clear our opinion that the Sultan's only chance of at some time or other reaching an understanding with England depends on his dropping the question of evacuation for the present.

We do not fear any lasting rapprochement of Turkey with France regarding the Egyptian question, for if the Sultan tried, by drawing nearer to France, to force on the British withdrawal, he would soon find that, in spite of all her promises, France is in no position to help him to obtain his heart's desire.

VIII. 91–2

COUNT MÜNSTER, IN PARIS, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *October 12th*, 1892

When Mr. Gladstone returned to power, the French politicians, who are mostly very shortsighted, dreamed of re-establishing French influence in Egypt, of the Entente Cordiale, of an understanding between England and Italy, and of more besides. Lord Rosebery's acceptance of the Foreign Office somewhat disturbed these illusions.

There is special annoyance here, because Sir Charles Dilke and Labouchere, the two English Francophils *par excellence*, are not only excluded from the Cabinet, but are on bad terms with Gladstone.

Mr. Gladstone's admirers here—M. Léon Say being one of the most prominent—are all in favour of Free Trade, and have at this

moment of Protectionist fever, which is still unabated, very little influence.

The new Tariff is injuring British trade severely and is naturally very displeasing to the English commercial classes. I can well imagine that Mr. Gladstone would like the French to be more in favour of Free Trade than they are, and also to see France arrive at an understanding with Spain, Italy and Switzerland on this question, but I think that his influence here is too weak to count in the balance.

The mistrust between the two Foreign Offices is, if anything, greater than even in Salisbury's time, if my observation is not deceived.

Lord Dufferin[1] complains bitterly of M. Ribot;[2] he has had some very unpleasant passages with him. The position of Waddington, the Ambassador in London, suffers from the fact that it is known there that M. Ribot is only thinking of how he can get rid of him.

The events in Uganda[3] have led to the most disagreeable discussions, and negotiations are in hand in regard to compensation demanded by the French Government for injuries suffered by the French Missions.

M. Ribot's method of making these claims has been offensive to England.

All this looks as if they were still far from the Entente Cordiale.

German Note.

Whilst since the beginning of the nineties Germany had been seeking a new system for her commercial treaties, France had continued to develop her policy of autonomy and isolation even more keenly than before; on February 1st, 1892, a heightened tariff came into force particularly against British interests.

VIII. 184

Count Hatzfeldt, in London, to the German Foreign Office, *November 17th*, 1892

Cipher telegram. Secret.

Lord Rosebery informed me in strictest confidence that a few days previously the French Ambassador had behind his back sought an interview with Mr. Gladstone and had discussed the Egyptian question with him. He, Lord Rosebery, had complained of this in Paris, and M. Ribot now denies that M. Waddington had been instructed to do this.

[1] Ambassador in Paris since 1891.

[2] French Foreign Minister since 1890; Prime Minister since December, 1892.

[3] In the middle of April, 1892, a great conflict arose between the British and French Missions in Uganda. (Cf. British Bluebooks: *The Uganda Protectorate*. Also S. H. Jeyes, *Lord Rosebery*, p. 147 et seq.)

Lord Rosebery, who is evidently much offended at this French action, added in strict confidence that France might now wait, before she got her way here on any question whatever.

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *December 26th*, 1892

Telegram.

The Imperial Consul-General in Cairo reports that the Egyptian Government has requested the permission of the representatives of the Great Powers to take from the surplus of the conversion of the Privileged Debt the sum of £E 60,000 annually for increasing the Army by 2 Battalions of Infantry and 2 Squadrons.

Please inform Lord Rosebery that we are prepared to consent, if the British Government wishes it.

VIII. 185

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *January 7th*, 1893

For your information.

Yesterday I telegraphed as follows to the Imperial Consul-General in Cairo : ' If you have not already sent out, in a binding official form, the declaration transmitted to you regarding the increase of the Egyptian Army, I beg you to hold it back, because the offensively hostile attitude of the British Embassy in Constantinople which in all railway schemes in Asia Minor assists French interests to the injury of Germany, bears no relation to the respect that Germany has shown to British interests for years past, sometimes even where, as in the East Asiatic Treaty, they are in competition with German interests. You may explain to Lord Cromer [1] also the reasons for our altered attitude.'

Count Leyden reports to-day, as follows :

' I have already handed in my note regarding the increase of the Army, in conjunction with my Italian colleague, but have made known to Lord Cromer the contents of Telegram No. 2. He honestly regrets the facts mentioned in it and will probably have telegraphed to London about its consequences. Meanwhile France has refused to consent to the increase of the Army.'

VIII. 187

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 14th*, 1893

Cipher telegram.

Lord Rosebery, speaking, as he particularly insisted, in a private capacity, and not as a Minister, remarked very confidentially

[1] Sir Evelyn Baring was created a Peer in June, 1892.

that, notwithstanding all the enmities excited in the Cabinet and out of it, he had always defended a rapprochement of England with the Triple Alliance. He could not help feeling anxious lest his efforts might be made extremely difficult owing to our change of attitude in Egypt. He had not been warned of it by us, and could not have anticipated it; moreover, the French were sure to make full use of it.

I replied that I could assure him that our attitude was not directed against him personally. We, on the contrary, had always set great store on his direction of England's foreign policy at this time. He had merely to help me to settle the immediate difficulties, and I was convinced that we should continue to value his friendship.

VIII. 187

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *January 22nd*, 1893

I learn from a sure source that M. Waddington expressed to Lord Rosebery, at first without showing that he was instructed to do so, his astonishment at England's interference with the Khedive's right to appoint a Ministry, as he pleased. Lord Rosebery is said to have replied that, considering the part assumed on the Nile by England, this Government cannot view with indifference measures undertaken by the Khedive, which are contrary to British interests.

A day or two later the French Ambassador returned to the subject and in the name of his Government demanded an explanation of England's 'high-handed policy' in Egypt (English in text). Lord Rosebery replied, in a manner allowing room for no misunderstanding, that the Khedive had acted in an arbitrary fashion, and that he, therefore, had not hesitated to take action against it at once. M. Waddington then dropped the subject.

VIII. 189

PRINCE VON RADOLIN, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *January 20th*, 1893

When Munir Pacha [1] brought the Sultan's congratulations on the Emperor's birthday, he added to his official duty a confidential communication from the Sultan to myself.

The Sultan feels himself placed in a very painful position by the intended increase of the British troops in Egypt. He hesitates to protest against this measure, but is urged to do so by the French Ambassador, who spoke to the Grand Vizir a short time ago. M. Cambon described the Sultan's attitude of passive

[1] Secrétaire de la Correspondance turque.

expectancy as a weakness and gave him to understand that it was his duty to his Mussulman subjects at least to protest against these aggressions by England. Munir Pacha added that the Sultan requested me to inform him through his messenger what the Imperial Government thought of it.

I replied that I had no instructions on this point, but that my view was that the Sultan had better not let himself be led astray by the French insinuations.

Whilst announcing the increase of troops, the British had renewed their recognition of the Sultan's suzerainty over Egypt, so that it might be a matter of indifference to the Sultan, whether considerations of policing and security induced the British to keep sometimes more troops there and sometimes less. A protest on the Sultan's part against a momentary increase would be taken as implying that he was acquiescing in the existing British occupation. An appeal could only be taken seriously, if the increase of troops was putting him at a disadvantage. Otherwise it would be but an empty word and would rather injure than benefit the Sultan's prestige. I said the Sultan was too exalted even to notice these questions of detail.

If the French were so anxious to defend the integrity of his rights and those of the Ottoman Empire, they ought to place a considerable military force at his disposal, and not to be content with phrases. They ought not to drive him into complications, nor, in return for *not* helping him, secure for themselves railway concessions in Syria, as a first step towards eventual possession of this province.

Munir Pacha thanked me for these confidential suggestions, but he repeated the Sultan's request to let him know, if I heard anything from Berlin regarding this affair.

My Austrian and Italian (Count Collobiano) colleagues have both spoken to the Foreign Minister in the same reassuring tone. Yesterday Said Pacha enquired our views, and I answered him much in the same sense as I had used to the Sultan through Munir Pacha.

VIII. 190–1

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 30th*, 1893

Cipher telegram.

I mentioned confidentially to Lord Rosebery the views (contained in the Memorandum of January 28th), and he begged me to report to Your Excellency his extreme gratitude for our attitude in respect of this Turkish enquiry. In the very confidential conversation that followed, he did not conceal that he expected still further trouble in Egypt, as the Khedive was being stiffened

and encouraged in his desire for independence, if not by the Sultan himself, at any rate by the former Viceroy, Ismail, who is just now in the Sultan's best books. Lord Rosebery said that, this being so, and in view of any further protest by the French, he had considered submitting the question for decision by the Powers, and that he was confident of seeing Germany, Austria and Italy on the side of England. Without myself expressing a view, I threw in the remark that the grouping he suggested would look as though England were joining the Triple Alliance. Lord Rosebery replied that would not frighten him, and that the late events in Egypt had, moreover, produced a change in many here, who before were decidedly opposed to such a combination.

A further remark of Lord Rosebery's indicated his feelings. I ask that it be kept very secret. He said: 'What would be England's position, if the Triple Alliance fell apart, and we found ourselves alone face to face with France and Russia combined?'

VIII. 191

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *January 31st*, 1893

Telegram.

In case Lord Rosebery refers again to the idea of submitting the question to the Powers for their decision, I beg you to advise him against it in a friendly way. Tell him that discussion of the legal aspect by the Powers, whether in a Conference or otherwise, will not benefit the real influence exercised by England in Egypt. It would rather be assisting the constant desire and the repeated attempts of France to bring the Egyptian question before the Court of Europe, whereby she hopes to recover her influence in Egypt.

Say to him, further, that the decisions of international Conferences do not go by majorities, and even with the support of the Triple Alliance, there would be no hope of strengthening England's legal position in Egypt against the opposition of France, Russia, and Turkey. In fact, there would be a risk of increased disturbances in Egypt and a weakening of England's real position. Moreover, the fact of its being submitted to the Powers could not fail to drive the Sultan into the arms of the French and Russians, and would accustom the two latter to act in common in the East, the one point where diversity of interests has so far kept them apart. Neither England nor ourselves could desire a Conference to end thus.

[On the following day Count Hatzfeldt reported that Lord Rosebery had given up his idea.]

VIII. 193

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO PRINCE VON RADOLIN, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, *January 31st*, 1893

Telegram.

We hear that Cambon is pressing the Sultan to appeal to the Powers to intervene about Egypt. If you find an opportunity, warn the Sultan and make him consider whether, when the question is discussed by all Europe, he will be able to withstand the French intentions, which, according to statements in the French and Russian Press, include the neutralisation of Egypt, which means its *separation* from Turkey.

VIII. 194

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *February 4th*, 1893

Cipher telegram. Extract.

The Turkish Ambassador said that Lord Rosebery gave him to understand that a direct understanding was not impossible, if there were no mention of evacuation or of a fixed date for it, and if England were empowered to act as the Sultan's Mandatory during the term of her occupation in Egypt.

VIII. 195

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *February 5th*, 1893

Secret.

In a very confidential conversation a few days ago the Turkish Ambassador lamented the continued irritation of the Sultan against England, as well as the want of friendliness shown here for Turkey. Every rumour, however unlikely, of the unfriendly intentions of the British Government is believed in Constantinople, and he is instructed to make enquiries here about it. It was lately his duty to ask whether there was any intention to send Lord Cromer on a special Mission to Constantinople, and Lord Rosebery had declared that it was absolutely without foundation.

Lately in the course of another such conversation, Rustem Pacha had asked Lord Rosebery confidentially, in reference to the Egyptian question, whether he did not consider it possible, and also to the interest of both parties, to come to an understanding with Turkey on the subject. The Minister did not deny this in principle, but remarked that it was not a good moment for it. It must first be seen whether the British Cabinet could hold together ; if so, it ought to be strong enough in three or four months for larger undertakings. Then perhaps the question might be discussed. Finally Lord Rosebery would not even allow the

Ambassador to report what he had said; he had for this reason, and also because his suggestion had been ineffective, completely omitted to do so, and he urgently begged me, on my part also, not to say anything about it, as under these circumstances he would be seriously compromised. My impression is that Rustem Pacha had no special instructions to make this proposal, and only acted on the basis of earlier general instructions.

Your Excellency will recollect from my telegram of November 17th, 1892,[1] that the French Ambassador managed to obtain a personal interview with Mr. Gladstone behind Lord Rosebery's back, which the latter took as a personal injury and has even now not forgiven. It appears—whether correctly I cannot yet determine—that M. Waddington's reports have given the impression in Paris that Mr. Gladstone is not disinclined to negotiate with France, and that Lord Rosebery's ill-will is the only obstacle to its fulfilment. In any case it is not without intention that information in this sense has reached the Sultan from Paris, which must have disquieted him, for Rustem Pacha, as I have found out since then, was instructed to enquire about it. At the time Lord Rosebery informed the Turkish Ambassador that there was no wish here to negotiate with France, and no proposals had been made, which might serve as a foundation for the supposition.

Meanwhile my personal observation has shown me that Lord Rosebery's irritation against France has increased and has been considerably strengthened by recent events in Egypt.[2] The embarrassment which it caused him at first has been doubled, since it is known that a section of his colleagues are not wholly in agreement with him on the question. He is thus forced to engage in a struggle, in order to get his way, which may make his own position insecure. His victory in the Cabinet and the undivided support which his energetic action in Egypt won for him throughout the country, have increased his confidence in himself, and to-day he has no doubt that if the Cabinet holds together at all, his position in it is almost unshakeable. On the other hand, he is watching, not without extreme anxiety, for reasons which Your Excellency will have read in my reports, the further development of affairs in Egypt. There is a possibility that he may be forced to take even more serious measures for the security of the British occupation, thereby aggravating the differences with France, and perhaps with Russia as well.

This anxiety and Lord Rosebery's temperament, which must be understood if the situation is to be judged aright, explains his idea of appealing to the Powers—an idea which he has given up since then at my suggestion—and which pursued an object hardly compatible with his former reserve—namely, a grouping of the

[1] Cf. p. 179. [2] Cf. note, p. 177.

Powers, which would bring England openly before the world on the side of the Triple Alliance. Closer consideration, and the reflection that public opinion was not sufficiently prepared, caused Lord Rosebery to renounce the idea, so I cannot feel surprised at his immediately beginning to look round for other means of strengthening the British occupation. To this end he selected the proposal made to the Turkish Ambassador, as indicated in my telegram of February 4th.

His standpoint on the whole question, as is shown by his utterances against M. Waddington is now as follows: 'England is accountable for her action in Egypt only to the Sultan or to all Europe.' Under present circumstances, there is a close connection between this point of view and the idea that an understanding with the Sultan would, if it could be brought about, furnish England with the legal title—still more or less lacking—for remaining in Egypt, and protect her against any claim made by another Power.

The Turkish Ambassador did not miss the suggestion hinted at by Lord Rosebery, although he was at first not clear as to its full significance. He therefore decided to clear it up in his next conversation with the Minister. With this end in view he visited Lord Rosebery two days ago. According to his recollection Lord Rosebery merely complained that the Sultan discussed Egypt freely with *every* Power, *except England*. Rustem Pacha objected to this that the accusation was unjustified, seeing that he had quite lately suggested an understanding in conversation with Lord Rosebery, but had been put off until later.

Your Excellency knows already of the bitterness shown by Lord Rosebery at the persistently unfriendly attitude against England in Constantinople, and particularly at certain utterances by the Grand Vizir. I give below what I have gathered from the very confidential communications of my Turkish colleague:

1. Lord Rosebery declared clearly and repeatedly that England would not allow herself to be dislodged, either by any incalculable decisions of the youthful Khedive or by intrigues of another Power (France). The only result would be a further suitable increase of the British forces in Egypt. 'This is to-day', he added, 'not merely a Government view, but the opinion of the whole nation.'

2. Whilst outlining the proposals for an understanding, the Minister did not for a moment deny that the Ambassador had rightly understood his new suggestions, but he spoke repeatedly of the risk of an indiscretion at Constantinople.

3. He declared staunchly that in the present situation there could naturally be no question of evacuation or of a fixed date,

and that England would act as the *Sultan's Mandatory* in Egypt, if the understanding became a reality.

The Turkish Ambassador repeated these utterances with a heavy heart, for he fears he is risking his own position. At his request I expressed my views to him again, as follows :

He knew well enough my personal views, regarding the interests of his Master in the matter, from our former conversations and from the advice I gave the Sultan at the time. I never concealed from him that the indiscretion to which I was then exposed, and the way the affair had been treated in Constantinople had estranged us, and caused us to decide never again to take the initiative in favour of the Sultan. Our intervention had, after all, led to nothing, and merely caused other Powers to suspect us.[1]

I myself am convinced of this and hold it my duty to say to Your Excellency that it would be an unhoped-for stroke of luck for the Sultan, if he could now repair his repeated mistakes in the rejection of the Drummond Wolff Convention and later, and at the same time enter into better relations with England.

If a change takes place, Lord Rosebery's mood, which arose from these circumstances, may pass off just as quickly as it came. About that let them make no mistake in Constantinople. If France renounces her opposition, as has often happened, or if England is forced to make a demonstration of power in Egypt, she will be able to do without this valuable mandate from the Sultan.

Lord Rosebery's thirst for an understanding on the programme which he has suggested still appears doubtful. It must be kept in mind that, so long as he is not sure of the Sultan's readiness to negotiate or at any rate of his discretion, he rightly thinks the greatest caution necessary. If the Sultan is at all ready to enter into direct and confidential negotiations—whether in Constantinople with the British Ambassador or, better still, between Lord Rosebery and a trusted agent of the Sultan's in London—it will first be a matter of ascertaining what, if any, are the bases for an understanding. My impression is that there would be more frankness and readiness to make several formal concessions here.

The Sultan would be most unwilling to grant a mandate to England for fear of the feeling amongst his Musulman subjects. If I might offer advice, I think that he would certainly start by refusing a demand so dangerous and so unprofitable. If there is an agreement, without evacuation, England will be fully justified in referring to the Suzerain's consent to the occupation, when dealing with other Powers, and the Sultan can then, without any

[1] Cf. p. 89.

disadvantage, be spared the almost unbearable suggestion that he should grant a mandate for the occupation of his property.

VIII. 199

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *February 8th*, 1893

During my last conversation with Lord Rosebery I mentioned, as I was authorised to do, the enclosure to the despatch of February 4th (a copy of Prince Radolin's despatch [1]), also M. Cambon's efforts to induce the Sultan to protest against the increase of British troops in Egypt. The Minister replied that he hardly believed now that the French intrigues would be successful in driving the Sultan to appear in open opposition to England on the question of increasing the army of occupation. His impression was rather that French diplomacy was beginning to see that it is playing a useless game. He considers, on the other hand, that the chief danger threatening his Egyptian policy lies in Egypt itself, for there the Khedive's unstable attitude is causing serious and continuous anxiety.

Lord Rosebery again expressed his gratitude for the Imperial Government's friendly attitude towards his Egyptian policy, as well as that of the Cabinets of Rome and Vienna. He remarked that the perfect co-operation between Sir Clare Ford [2] and Prince Radolin was most valuable to him, and he set even more store on a general agreement with us in Constantinople than on a satisfactory solution of the Anatolian Railway question.

VIII. 199–200

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO PRINCE VON RADOLIN, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, *February 9th*, 1893

I enclose copies of Count Hatzfeldt's telegrams of February 1st and 4th.

If you think it wise to ask the Sultan a direct question, you are authorised to remind him again that, if the question is submitted to the Powers, it is to be feared that the neutralisation of Egypt might fall under discussion and be carried through.

The question of a direct understanding with the British, a course which seems to be the right one for the Sultan, I beg you not to touch upon, and I ask you only to refer him to our former advice, if the Sultan himself raises the matter.

It would be best for the Sultan to refrain from taking any action at all on these recent events, as indeed you advised him correctly.

[1] Cf. p. 181.

[2] Ambassador in Constantinople in succession to Sir W. White, who died in December, 1891.

I have received your report of January 20th, and can only say that I approve the answer you returned to Munir Pacha.

VIII. 200

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *April 5th*, 1893

Secret.

Last Wednesday Lord Rosebery held a conversation with Rustem Pacha. He was determined to discuss Egypt quite openly, but under the express condition of absolute secrecy, and to make no concealment of his wish to come to a direct understanding with the Sultan on this question.

With an appeal to the personal confidence, founded on an acquaintanceship of many years' standing with the Ambassador, Lord Rosebery explained his view (which he first described as being personal to himself) that there could be no question of simply restoring the Wolff Convention, as regarded the settlement of a date for evacuation, for circumstances had completely altered in the meantime. At the same time it might be possible to meet the Sultan's wishes by including a clause in the Agreement to be concluded, to the effect that both parties would consider discussing together the question of evacuation, after a certain period, say five years, should have elapsed.

In this conversation the Minister clearly took great pains to quote and develop every argument to prove that it is to the Sultan's interest to agree with England and to let the present situation continue with his, the Sultan's approval. With this in view, he especially indicated that even if the British withdrew, assuming it were possible now, the Sultan's wish to close Egypt against any foreign occupation would by no means be attained. A fresh and immediate occupation of the country in another form would in this case be inevitable, either by a single Power, under the authority of the Great Powers (Lord Rosebery expressly excluded France, if I am rightly informed), or by a mixed occupation. In either case it must be assumed with certainty that the Sultan's rights would not receive any particular attention. Whereas, an understanding with England would assure to the Sultan not only the recognition of his rights by treaty, but also the prospect that these rights would never again be attacked, when later on England withdrew from Egypt in pursuance of the intended understanding regarding the occupation.

Finally Lord Rosebery expressed his strong wish that the Sultan would exercise the strictest discretion regarding his overtures, and that, if an exchange of views was desired, it should take place directly with him, Lord Rosebery, through the mediation of Rustem Pacha.

The Turkish Ambassador, whose nervous condition is known to Your Excellency, considered it his absolute duty to report fully to his Master on this conversation and to explain to him the reasons which seemed to him, Rustem Pacha, conclusively in favour of entering into the discussion desired by Lord Rosebery. It must all the more be borne in mind that Rustem is by no means sure that, if the Sultan clings to his present dislike of England, which is so carefully fostered by France and Russia, he will not call him to account for his championship of an understanding with England.

In order to avoid all misunderstanding regarding the contents of his communication, which his enemies may use to the injury of himself and the cause with the Sultan, Rustem has, despite the loss of time, refrained from telegraphing, but has attached to his detailed report, forwarded direct to the Sultan and not through the Porte, an exact translation in Turkish. This was to leave here on Monday, April 3rd, and will therefore, if I am not mistaken, hardly reach Constantinople, before this report is in Your Excellency's hands.

The Turkish Ambassador, to whose friendship of many years and personal confidence I owe the above information, strongly urged me to keep it absolutely secret and not to communicate it even to Berlin. The event, however, seems too important to me for my report to be postponed, as it shows both Lord Rosebery's pressing need of an understanding with Turkey, and also his confidence in being able eventually to force his view of the affair on his colleagues. At the same time I venture to urge that its contents may be kept absolutely secret, and also, if Your Excellency considers it necessary to communicate it to Prince Radolin, to recommend to him also the strictest discretion.

I must mention that when Rustem Pacha asked for my opinion, I replied that I knew of nothing likely to modify my former *personal* views with regard to the Sultan's interests in the matter, but that for the reasons given to him before, I must refrain from all official intervention.

VIII. 202

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *April 18th*, 1893

Cipher telegram. Secret.

A few days ago the Sultan answered the Turkish Ambassador's report by telegraph. He sees with pleasure that Lord Rosebery's views on Egypt are approaching *nearer to his own*, and intends to discuss the matter very soon with Sir Clare Ford.

The Ambassador communicated the above to Lord Rosebery, who said that he would decidedly have preferred the negotiations

to take place here in London, for the sake of a greater guarantee of discretion. Rustem Pacha immediately brought this remark of the Minister's to the Sultan's knowledge.

The Ambassador, who made the above communication to me in strictest confidence, stated that it was quite out of the question that the Sultan might still be deluding himself and expecting from his latest reports some concession or other on Lord Rosebery's part, e.g. the naming of a date for the evacuation of Egypt or even negotiations about this matter, for he, Rustem Pacha, had in his reports repeatedly and clearly established the contrary with full explanation of the reasons.

BARON VON ROTENHAN, GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *April 18th*, 1893

Telegram.

Your telegram and, as you know, reports from Constantinople cause the view to be taken here that between Lord Rosebery and the Sultan there exists great diversity of views and misunderstandings regarding Egypt. As we see no prospect of success for any negotiations, I beg you to remain entirely aloof from the whole affair.

VIII. 203

German Note.

At the end of May, 1893, Count Hatzfeldt held several confidential conversations with Lord Rosebery on the general political situation and on England's attitude towards the groups of Powers.

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *May 27th*, 1893

Confidential.

As regards the further development of affairs in Egypt, and the Viceroy's attitude in particular, Lord Rosebery appeared to feel rather uncertain. He learns that the Viceroy is to go to Constantinople in the course of the year. Lord Rosebery does not wish to stand in his way, although he is well aware that many anti-British influences will be brought to bear on the young gentleman.

His chief anxiety of all, as is evident from his apparent indifference to other matters, is just now France. He did not conceal it from me, and declared straight out that he was concentrating all his attention on Paris, where both the attitude of the Press and speeches by Ministers revealed extraordinary animosity against England on account of Egypt, Madagascar and, especially perhaps latterly, Siam.[1] There appears to be no word yet of

[1] Cf. Chapter XVII.

appointing a French Ambassador to the English Court, and Lord Rosebery assumes that Paris is in no hurry about it. M. Waddington's successor will have a difficult task, if, as I hear from other quarters, it has been already decided in Paris formally to re-introduce discussion of the evacuation of Egypt. At present there are no symptoms here, and I have observed in my latest conversations with the Minister nothing to lead me to expect a greater inclination to give way on this question, on which all M. Waddington's efforts have been wrecked. But if his successor is not the man to know how to act with the necessary tact and great moderation, it is not at all impossible that, considering Lord Rosebery's extreme sensitiveness, a greater and, perhaps, lasting tension between the two Governments may be the result.

A remark of Lord Rosebery's at the close of our last conversation regarding relations with France interested me particularly, and I venture to repeat it here. He said: 'On me dit toujours qu'il faut entretenir des relations cordiales avec la France, et je ne demande pas mieux, mais où est le moyen?' He did not mention the source of this advice, so I can only suppose that it comes from those of his fellow-Liberals, both in and out of the Cabinet, who wish to avoid any serious complication with the Continent on principle, and who always preach the maintenance of good relations with France, as they imagine that England will thus be relieved of the necessity of leaning towards the Triple Alliance and be able to hold aloof from all European complications. I consider it not at all unlikely—and Lord Rosebery's remark strengthens this supposition—that he is heavily pressed on that side to show all possible compliance to France in the questions under dispute and so pave the way for a political understanding between the two countries.

VIII. 205

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *June 15th*, 1893

In conversation with Lord Rosebery yesterday the Turkish Ambassador referred to the question of an understanding regarding Egypt, which had originally been opened by Lord Rosebery. He told me, however, very confidentially that he had met with a very unsatisfactory reception. The Minister told him pretty clearly that circumstances had altered, that public opinion here was turning more and more against Turkey, and that it was *now too late* to return to the proposed understanding.

The Under-Secretary of State, Sir Philip Currie, with whom the Turkish Ambassador then discussed the Porte's relations with England, repeatedly declared that the Sultan was doing nothing for England and must first of all show more good will.

My Turkish colleague tells me confidentially that the Sultan is highly incensed at the action which took place here regarding Armenia. He insists on the British Government putting a stop to all publications on the subject directed against himself, and Rustem Pacha is making vain efforts to explain to him that with the best will in the world the British Government is not in the position to pass such a law.

VIII. 205–6

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *July 9th*, 1893

I enclose copies of two reports from the Imperial Consul-General in Cairo (June 30th and July 1st), in which Count Leyden describes the feeling about England, prevailing in Egypt. It appears that the situation in Egypt is greatly influenced by want of confidence in the present British Government's consistency in its foreign policy; this is felt not only in the circles hostile to England, but by the British subjects resident in Egypt as well. We do not share this want of confidence to the extent that Count Leyden seems to do, as we have seen your reports describing the increasing influence of Lord Rosebery inside the British Government, and particularly owing to your communication of Lord Rosebery's statement regarding the proposals made by the Sultan concerning Egypt. Nevertheless, the doubts as to an energetic British foreign policy, even if unjustified, are sure not to be without influence in future developments in Egypt and the East, from the mere fact that they are taking root there more and more. They are bound to discourage the adherents of England and increase the self-confidence of her adversaries.

As you know well, it has ever been an axiom of our policy not to pursue direct political interests in the East. In spite of this we have for long supported British interests there, because we felt the need of a counterweight against a Franco-Russian combination in the Mediterranean, in the interests of our Allies —Italy in particular—and also of the world's peace. We have openly and actively used our influence in many questions, as they arose, in favour of British policy in Cairo and Constantinople. But the fact of the existence of the Triple Alliance is the greatest moral service that we offer to the British. We shall readily continue to support a consistent British policy in Egypt and the Levant; but naturally only so long as England herself stands up for her position and interests. Thus it is highly important for us to know and follow carefully the British Government's intentions in Eastern affairs; for the moment we became convinced that England is failing to perform with proper energy the part assigned to her there and dictated, as we believe, by her own interests, and is more or less giving way to the combined efforts of France and

Russia, we must look round for other means to stop Franco-Russian friendship from developing into an aggressive combination.

Therefore I beg you to keep in continuous touch with Lord Rosebery as to his intentions in the East, and especially in Egypt, and to encourage him to cling firmly to his present policy, as far as possible. To this end you can make use of the points of view indicated above, as it seems best to you.

VIII. 207

PRINCE VON RADOLIN, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 11th*, 1893

Cipher telegram. Secret.

On July 8th the Sultan had the draft for a Convention to be concluded with England despatched to the Turkish Ambassador in London. It stipulates for the express recognition of his Suzerainty over Egypt and for an engagement on the part of England to obtain the Porte's agreement beforehand to any necessary increase of the British military establishment in Egypt.

This provisional Convention is to be replaced after two years by a definitive one, laying down the date for the evacuation of Egypt by the British troops.

The Khedive arrived here yesterday and was very graciously received by the Sultan. To-day follows the Investiture with the Order of Imtiaz, with the Galadin Order to follow. There has been no discussion of political questions so far.

VIII. 208

HOLSTEIN, GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *July 14th*, 1893

Private.

Lord Rosebery's refusal to consider the occupation as expressly 'provisional' leads to the conclusion that he realises that British public opinion is strongly in favour of continuing the occupation.

It would be more conciliatory, if Lord Rosebery, when he next sees Rustem Pacha, would link his refusal to deal with the matter with the threat reported in your last telegram, somewhat in the following sense—

'He does not think evil of the Sultan or of his Ambassador on account of this threat, since it does not originate from either of them, but from the Khedive. The latter is encouraged in his defiant attitude *from outside*, if not by the Sultan, and the Minister believes it is from outside that efforts will be made to drive the Khedive even further. This is the real reason that makes it impossible for the British Government to deal with the Egyptian

question *now*. A Cabinet which could be accused of having given way to a threat would be overthrown by public opinion at once. To-day, therefore, the British Government is forced to treat the situation created by the Khedive's defiant attitude coldly, and will not be able to resume the Egyptian negotiations, until all trace of a threat has disappeared. No date for beginning can be determined, for it is impossible at present to say when the element of an obvious threat will disappear.'

A British reply such as this would be easier for Rustem Pacha to transmit to the Sultan than the one given in your telegram.

You will best combat any suspicion of our ultimate intentions on Lord Rosebery's part by recommending him to deal with the Sultan in a firm, but more friendly manner—not harshly,—so as not to make it more difficult for him to turn to England again.

Without quoting Rustem as your informant, you might perhaps introduce a discussion of the affair by announcing that we shall make it our business to find out in St. Petersburg more about the Russian squadron's visit to the Mediterranean.[1]

Under these circumstances it is highly important to strengthen the British Mediterranean fleet. But there is no need for England to make a public declaration defining her attitude in any way.

The Russian Press has repeatedly voiced the opinion that the Russo-French Naval demonstration is undertaken with two objects,—that of settling the Egyptian question, and also of making the Sultan realise the justice of Russian claims in the Balkan Peninsula ; i.e. a warning to be careful, but no intention of making war. The Tsar desires this less than ever.

It will be easy to induce Italy to join in a demonstration by reminding her of the fact that the day which sees the Egyptian question go, *par impossible*, against England will also turn the Tripolis question to Italy's disadvantage.

How would it be, if the British and Italian fleets arranged a friendly meeting with the French and Russian squadrons, if possible in a Turkish port, or in case of need at Spezzia ? Would not the glamour be removed from the Franco-Russian demonstration, especially as the Italian ships would be the largest there ?

It would be unpleasant for the British, and a clever move on Russia's part, if the French and Russians arranged a friendly meeting with the Italian fleet alone, without England, thus making the Russians the connecting link between the French and Italians.

If you agree with me, I beg you to discuss these questions with Lord Rosebery soon—if possible before he sees the Turkish

[1] The visit to Toulon in October, 1893, which had caused much perturbation ever since the spring.

Ambassador. The Secretary of State has seen and approved all the above.

We hear much good of Nicolson's activities in Constantinople. But Lascelles would be a very suitable substitute for Ford.

The St. Petersburg newspapers say that the Russian Squadron will reach Toulon in the middle of August.

German Note.

Sir Arthur Nicolson represented Sir Clare Ford (on leave) from June till October, and was Chargé d'Affaires from December, 1893, when the latter was appointed Ambassador in Rome.

VIII. 210

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *July 13th*, 1893

Extract.

Regarding the Khedive's presence in Constantinople, I found Lord Rosebery still under the illusion that the extremely humiliating treatment, which as a vassal he was bound to meet with there, would tend to cool down the heat of his desire to do something against England. Against this I said that the news in the papers did not admit of being treated with contempt and that Abbas Pacha's reception, on the contrary, had been a more honourable one than had in my experience usually been accorded by the Sultan to a vassal. Lord Rosebery could not deny the correctness of this, and he began to complain irritably of the Sultan, as has been his habit for weeks past. I took this opportunity to explain to the Minister that any advance on his part towards the proposals expected from the Sultan regarding Egypt, even if they sounded not altogether unfavourable, would at this moment be construed as weakness, not only in Constantinople, but also in Paris and St. Petersburg. Lord Rosebery agreed with this view, and to make his opinion of the Sultan clear to me, he said very confidentially that he had only followed up the Armenian question, which, in and for itself, did not interest him in the least degree, with the object of showing the Sultan the unpleasantnesses which might await him, unless he changed his attitude towards England.

I shall deal in a separate report with the impression created on the mind of the Minister by the approaching possibility of a permanent union of the French and Russian squadrons in the Mediterranean.

At the close of my conversation I remarked to Lord Rosebery that he knew that we had supported British policy in Egypt both in Cairo and in Constantinople almost without exception. We should willingly continue this course, but on the clear assumption that England did not renounce her position and interests there

and defended them with proper energy. Lord Rosebery clearly understood my hint and thanked me for our friendly intentions. The fact that our conversation was at an end prevented any further discussion of the subject, and I think it better to wait, until he is less depressed, before starting on it again.

German Note.

On July 20th Radolin telegraphed from Constantinople that the Khedive had suggested to the Sultan to circularise the Powers with an appeal for their intervention in favour of the rights of the Sultan and the Khedive. Radolin's communications were passed on to Count Hatzfeldt.

VIII. 213

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO PRINCE VON RADOLIN, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, *July 21st*, 1893

Telegram.

The present moment, when we are expecting a great naval demonstration by both the rival parties in the Mediterranean, would be especially dangerous for opening the question of Egypt, either by a Circular to the Powers or by proposals for a Conference. For, if the quarrel became acute, the storm centre would then become not Alexandria, but the Bosphorus. This ought to make the Sultan wish this summer to pass by in peace. If there were an attempt to induce the Sultan to take political action in the course of this summer, it would not be for the sake of *his* interests. It will be much better for him to avoid being driven either to take action, or to favour either party. He should keep tacking diplomatically. The interests which the Sultan has to defend are so complicated that he never can treat the same Powers as Allies or enemies for long together. The parts are interchanged according to circumstances.

Before your departure you will communicate this suggestion direct to the Sultan or through Raghib Bey,[1] if possible, as from yourself.

VIII. 214

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *July 24th*, 1893

Cipher.

Your telegrams received. Lord Rosebery was evidently pleased at the success of our efforts in Constantinople,[2] for which he thanked me. He readily admitted that it was not to England's interest that the Sultan's present attitude should be ascribed to any influence other than that of England.

[1] The Sultan's Chamberlain.

[2] In deterring the Turks from appealing to the Powers.

CHAPTER XV

LIBERAL FOREIGN POLICY. NOVEMBER, 1892, TO JUNE, 1893

German Note.

A report from Baron von Heyking, the Consul-General at Bombay (October 17th, 1892), gave a full account of a secret memorandum of the Anglo-Indian Military Department on the military measures to be taken in the event of a Russian advance into Afghanistan. It showed that the Indian Government, in consideration of Lord Salisbury's conviction that England could under no circumstances count on the support of the Turkish Army, believed that the once contemplated scheme of striking a blow at Russia's power in the Caucasus must be entirely abandoned.

IX. 88

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *November 11th*, 1892

I beg to send you in strict confidence, for your personal information, a copy of a report from Simla with its two enclosures.[1]

You will see from the report that no use can be made of the contents, on account of the source whence Herr von Heyking gathered his information. In spite of the interest with which we follow the Indian Government's preparations against a problematical Russian attack, we must do no more than observe it platonically. This applies also to the British Government's discussions on the advisability or otherwise of one day defending India by action in the Black Sea. But Lord Salisbury's reasons against the possibility of British action in the Black Sea, as given in the enclosure, contain a nearer interest for us on account of our allies.

If the British Government really sees Turkey as a faithful ally of Russia's, and if Lord Salisbury on this account himself renounces the idea of any action in the Black Sea in the event of any Russian menace to India, we are obliged to conclude that the British statesman would regard even a direct Russian advance on Constantinople as an event which he must contemplate helplessly.

A Russian occupation of the Straits would not injure our interests directly, as has often been argued. We believe—and

[1] Not included in the German original.

can also assure our allies, Austria and Italy—that as long as England is unperturbed by such an occupation, they, our allies, can suffer it without giving up vital interests.

But in order to convince our allies of the above before it is too late, it is very important to us to know in advance whether Lord Salisbury's declaration to the Indian Government was only calculated on this or reproduced his real opinion regarding Turkey. I shall therefore be particularly thankful and interested to receive any communication that you can transmit to me on this question.

We have no indications—and your personal acquaintanceship with the Sultan and affairs in Turkey will confirm it—that the Sultan has determined in advance to throw himself into Russia's arms in the event of war. We believe, on the contrary, that he will attach himself to the Power whose ships first appear in the Straits.

I have lately heard from a trustworthy private source that the British Mediterranean squadron has its orders to remain not more than 48 hours' distance from the Dardanelles, so that it ought constantly to be in a position to arrive first in front of the Sultan's palace at the critical moment. If, however, England renounces this advantage from the start and the news of it reaches the Golden Horn, the Sultan may well think he has cause to pledge himself to Russia from the first.

IX. 90

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *November 24th*, 1892

Secret.

In order to answer the question raised in your despatch of November 11th regarding British policy in the event of a Russian advance, particularly against India, it is essential first to refer back to Lord Salisbury's policy and to decide how far, if at all, the picture given in the enclosure to the despatch corresponds with reality.[1]

Your Excellency knows that continuously for nearly seven years I was in touch with Lord Rosebery's predecessor, not only officially, but also on terms of close personal friendship, such as seldom happens in similar circumstances, and may therefore assume that I have some knowledge of his views on the great political questions of the future. I beg respectfully to add that the keen and painstaking observations of Baron Heyking, which I have always followed with great interest, are worthy of full recognition, and any difference of opinion between us in judging this question will merely arise from the circumstance that his

[1] Cf. p. 163.

observation is confined to that of local conditions and feelings in India, whilst I have been able to follow Lord Salisbury's general policy on the spot and in close association with him.

Although I consider Lord Salisbury to be no less cautious than subtle as a statesman, indeed the only one in England who thinks of the real greatness of the country in foreign politics or understands our point of view regarding the treatment of European questions, I should be guilty of exaggeration if I did not add that even here there are light and shade together. Lord Salisbury is not quite free from certain prejudices and weaknesses, which at times dim his otherwise clear view and clog his activity. Besides the fact that, like all British statesmen, he is dependent on party interests and public opinion, he allows himself to be influenced by personal scruples and prejudices. There is, for instance, his rooted prejudice against the Sultan's personality and his fixed dislike of Signor Crispi, which at the time without doubt stood seriously in the way of a closer understanding with Italy.

On the whole, however, Lord Salisbury was perfectly clear on the European situation and on the aims that he must follow in foreign politics in the interests of his country, even if he endeavoured—and in view of the present situation, he must endeavour —to involve in obscurity his leanings towards the Triple Alliance and his actions in support of it, in order not to give to his opponents weapons, which they might use against him. Above all we can consider that he held it to be of supreme interest to England to join Austria, Italy, and perhaps also ourselves, in stemming the Russian advance towards Constantinople and the Dardanelles and to prevent the excessive development of the power of France and of French influence in the Mediterranean. As regards the last, I think there can be no doubt that he was firmly resolved to help Italy, if she were attacked by France, assuming that public opinion, which is always an important factor here, would support him. This, as Your Excellency will remember, for a long time, to Lord Salisbury's regret, did not appear quite certain owing to Signor Crispi's ineptitude.

As regards his relations towards us in particular, which during his whole term of office did actually influence his whole attitude in foreign questions,—I know from his own words that until Your Excellency's appointment as Chancellor, he followed our policy not without suspicion. His main impression was that our efforts were directed at pushing forward England alone in questions likely to lead to a European crisis and reserving for ourselves an eventual understanding with Russia. This suspicion did not disappear until after Your Excellency's appointment, and I have never remarked a trace of it in him since that date.

As regards the East, Lord Salisbury's views, which I learnt from him in countless conversations, may be summed up as follows :—

If the Russians advanced against the Bosphorus, he was in principle determined to send the British fleet through the Dardanelles up to Constantinople, and had, to this end, strengthened the Mediterranean squadron and warned it to be ready for telegraphic orders at any moment. His rooted mistrust of the present Sultan, any call for assistance from whom he would certainly have answered, caused him to doubt whether he would not let himself be misled into denying to the British squadron a passage through the Dardanelles. Even so he did not feel obliged to refrain from action and had evidently been considering the forcing of the Dardanelles. On the other hand, he saw a much greater, and perhaps unsurmountable, danger in the possibility—unlikely, however, in his opinion—of a Russian occupation of the Dardanelles, if they succeeded in getting there before the British ships. Owing to this uncertainty he was preparing to act according to circumstances.

From the above it may be concluded that it would be a false assumption for the belief to arise, even in India, that the late Prime Minister ever dreamed of standing by whilst the Russians overpowered the Sultan, and that he was not fully determined to step in with the assistance of the friendly Powers and make serious use of the Fleet.

It is quite another question whether Lord Salisbury thought of countering a Russian advance against India by a British push into the Black Sea.

For similar reasons I avoided touching closely with him on the danger to India, in which we could not assist England. But it was casually discussed between us, and from his often repeated words I think I can gather what he thought. First of all, he thought that this danger was not imminent in the near future, and that considering the vast space that still lay between these two spheres in Asia, a good many years must pass, before the two frontiers approached near enough to make the risk of a clash possible. All his utterances on this point also show that he was firmly convinced that the defensive measures decided upon and carried out would amply suffice to ensure India successfully against any Russian attack.

If Lord Rosebery has given a cool reception to the proposals of the Indian Government, particularly in respect of the sending of a further 30,000 British troops, there are various practical considerations underlying this attitude besides the causes already mentioned. Apart from the fact that in the present state of the British Army the despatch of 30,000 troops would scarcely be

possible straight off, it would make a great sensation here and lead to endless discussions in the Press and in Parliament, which would hardly be to the taste of the Government. At the same time I may assume that Lord Salisbury's impression was that the exorbitant and pretentious demands of the Indian military authorities must be moderated somewhat. To the same feeling, quite apart from his genuine distrust of the Sultan, may be ascribed his having actually expressed in his communication to the Indian Government his view that the Sultan would probably throw himself into the arms of Russia. I am convinced from my knowledge of him, that if Lord Salisbury ever thought in the back of his mind of pursuing the Russians in the Black Sea in the event of their attacking India, he would have carefully concealed his thought from any one in India.

If however at any time there is a real prospect of an attack on India and therefore of a serious state of war with Russia, I consider that we may assume that once *any* British Government takes up arms, it will try hard to damage and weaken the enemy at *every* possible point and so force him to give up the attack on India, or at any rate to pursue his object with more slender means. If this suggestion seems correct, it should be all the more probable that England will one day not be idle in the Black Sea also, seeing that, if the matter is rightly handled, there is a prospect of her being supported there by powerful Allies.

Finally I beg leave to quote a very interesting utterance made by Lord Rosebery during my chance confidential conversation with him yesterday. It throws a clear light on his point of view and also on the necessity for exceptional caution, which he still feels he must observe in the interests of his policy.

In the course of conversation we touched on the situation in the Mediterranean and the East. In order to draw more out of him, I remarked that Lord Salisbury had formerly assured me that he always had the Mediterranean squadron at the end of the telegraph line and could order any necessary movement at any moment. Lord Rosebery confirmed this, saying that the Mediterranean squadron was then also provided with definite instructions. He added, evidently with intention : ' These instructions have not since been altered—at least I do not think that this can have happened without my knowledge.' Then, seeing me look rather surprised, he continued : ' You see, my most honoured Chief, the Prime Minister,[1] understands very little of foreign politics and knows he does not. But as he is sometimes inclined to be pro-French, I try to avoid all discussion by altering in principle nothing that I found when I took Office. This is the case with those orders.'

[1] Mr. Gladstone.

I beg Your Excellency to treat the above quotation as strictly confidential.

VIII. 93

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *November 24th*, 1892

Secret.

. . . In addition to the fact that no use can be made of your despatch (of the 11th) on account of the source of the information,[1] it is also certain that since Lord Rosebery took Office, I have realised more and more that the only way to gain his full confidence by degrees is not to begin upon the great political questions, but to allow him to do so. The moment he imagines that he is being led on to make some perhaps compromising statement, he becomes anxious and reserved. For this reason I have tried so far to see him but seldom, and then only if I have special business to discuss with him. The result of this policy, which I thought advisable in these early days, has been justified in that Lord Rosebery has several times of his own initiative shown a wish to see me, and then been franker and more trusting.

There is also another circumstance which does not often come to the front, but which is familiar to me. Even before his departure from Office, Lord Salisbury said to me confidentially but frankly, that if Mr. Gladstone regained the direction of British policy, he was sure that, when he himself returned to power, he would find us allied to Russia again. From some words of the Under-Secretary of State, who possessed Lord Salisbury's complete confidence, I have become firmly convinced that the latter has never concealed his anxiety from him on this head. I am sure also that Sir Philip Currie, who had to instruct his new Chief in the business, pointed out to him (perhaps at Lord Salisbury's desire) the danger of driving us to make certain concessions to Russia, which might be unwelcome to England, by pursuing a Francophil policy or committing other mistakes.

I think that this anxiety will work upon Lord Rosebery all the more if we persist in showing confidence in him personally, yet without pressing for an understanding on political questions of the future, if he does not himself begin the discussion. I consider that my attitude should aim at giving the impression that I assume that he personally agrees with his predecessor, but I am not yet convinced of his dominating influence in the Cabinet or of his strength in dealing with any tendency of Mr. Gladstone or other Ministers to disagree with him, and for this reason am perhaps bound to maintain reserve; also that we probably are

[1] From India.

contemplating the possibility of altering our present policy and recommending our allies to do the same, if we become finally convinced that loyal and active support of the Triple Alliance, or even of those of its aims which are identical with England's real interests, can never be expected from this Cabinet.

Considering the present situation here, I should not think it advisable to go further than this or to describe as probable any kind of alteration of our policy in questions that concern England, unless for other weighty reasons of European policy. I consider that it should not be overlooked that Lord Rosebery is the one element in this Cabinet, which it is important for us to maintain and strengthen, since he is the sole counterweight against Gladstone's fantastic and more or less Francophil leanings. He alone does not wish to give us Egypt, is attracted to the Triple Alliance, and on the whole represents the Salisbury tradition as regards British foreign policy. For this very reason he has many opponents in the Party and probably even in the Cabinet, and his position is a very difficult one, necessitating the greatest caution. If we desired to make his position more difficult by demanding an immediate and definite statement dealing for instance with a possible Russian advance against India, or intimating a possible change in our own policy regarding Constantinople. I can only conceive two possible results. Either Lord Rosebery would attempt to get the Cabinet to agree to declarations involving definite partisanship against Russia and, by implication, France, and likely to lead to strained relations with both Powers, when they come to know of it ; in which case, as things are now, he would certainly run up against the opposition of at least a section of his colleagues and be faced with the choice of giving in or retiring. The other alternative, and one which I think by no means inconceivable, is that Lord Rosebery, with whom personal ambition plays an important part, wishes above all to keep his position, and if he sees no possibility of satisfying us without making himself impossible, he will not scruple to make concessions to the other side.

In both cases the only counterweight in this Cabinet against the Francophil and other unhealthy tendencies of some of its Members would be destroyed, and we should lose the one Minister, whom, as far as I know, even the Russians and French recognise as hindering the realisation of their hopes, if they could also rely on the weakness of Gladstone.

With this in view I have always had the impression that in consideration of the future's uncertainty for us and our friends, it is especially desirable to keep Lord Rosebery in Office. . . .

We have also to consider that we have to deal here with a temporary state of affairs, which will very likely be cleared up

when Parliament meets in February next year. I may not agree with the sanguine hopes of many Conservatives in expecting that the Irish question by itself will cause the fall of Gladstone's Cabinet; but it will probably soon become evident, perhaps as early as February or March, whether the Government's weak majority, composed as it is of heterogeneous elements, will hold together and so allow the latter to look forward to a long term of Office.

Should the above come to pass, if Your Excellency will permit me to express an opinion, I should think the time come to leave Mr. Gladstone in no doubt that we and our allies cannot hold ourselves bound to act in the interests of England and expose ourselves to dangerous European complications, so long as we are not quite certain, in what way, if at all, England means to do her part.

I beg Your Excellency to examine my very detailed discussion of the situation in England to-day and my views on it, and I respectfully remark that it would be of high value for my further attitude towards Lord Rosebery, to be informed whether Your Excellency agrees with this view and with the attitude that I observe towards the present Foreign Secretary. . . .

German Note.

Baron von Marschall's reply (December 10th, 1892) expressed the required agreement: 'I am entirely of your opinion that it is not now desirable to press Lord Rosebery for declarations, but that we may rather content ourselves with his present attitude for the time being and await further developments.'

VIII. 96

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *May 26th*, 1893

Very confidential.

When I saw my Italian colleague for the first time after a long interval, I observed that when the subject of Rosebery came up in conversation, he expressed himself with more warmth and interest than used to be his habit. On the other hand, I soon noticed that Lord Rosebery's feeling, which in the early part of his term of Office was little sympathetic towards the Italian Ambassador, had also sensibly altered in his favour. I felt it not without interest to seek out the reasons for this curious mutual rapprochement, which may have an importance for the political relations between these two countries, and therefore for us.

A long and confidential conversation with Count Tornielli to-day offered an opportunity for this, and my task was all the

easier, since he very willingly consented to inform me of his experiences with the Minister and his opinion of him.

To my astonishment the Ambassador mentioned Lord Salisbury, of whom he spoke with a certain bitterness, and accused him of an absolute lack of political honesty. In all the business he had had with the Conservative Premier, his impression had always been that the latter's utterances were not meant honestly and only aimed at avoiding Italy's wishes by means of more or less plausible excuses. He would never forget how, when Italy pressed for a joint démarche in Paris in reference to the establishment of a naval port at Biserta, Lord Salisbury, at a loss for an excuse, finally took refuge in the almost childish assertion that the British Admiralty, far from regarding the establishment of that French naval port as a disadvantage, hailed the splitting up of the French Mediterranean fleet, which would be the result, if war broke out, as an advantage for the British fleet.

Tornielli claimed to have had quite other experiences with the present Foreign Minister for some months past. Lord Rosebery was a statesman of determined will and a clear thinker, whose genuine sincerity inspired complete confidence on every occasion. On every subject that he, Tornielli, had discussed with him, Lord Rosebery had always quite openly, and without seeking excuses, said how far, if at all, he could go with him. Subsequent events had shown that he would keep his word absolutely. . . .

Then came the circumstance that Lord Rosebery had proved his independence of Gladstone and the other Ministers, and that the existence of the Cabinet, with Lord Rosebery playing this part in it, appeared quite safe for an indefinite period. If the House of Lords really rejected the Home Rule Bill towards the end of this year, it would not at all necessarily entail the retirement of this Cabinet, and Mr. Gladstone would be perfectly free to bring it in again next year. But Lord Rosebery would still be an indispensable member of this Cabinet, as long as it lasted,—a fact which was becoming clearer and clearer. His influence over the Prime Minister's personal attitude in Foreign Affairs was shown now unmistakably by the speech, in which the latter categorically declared for the first time, and in contradiction of his former attitude, that France had no especial rights entitling her to interfere in the Egyptian question. . . .

German Note.

On May 1st Sir Charles Dilke asked the Prime Minister in the House of Commons whether the moment had arrived for carrying out the often promised evacuation of Egypt. In contradiction of his former views, Gladstone refused firmly to consider any fixed moment for evacuation;

the beneficial British control could not cease until the obligation assumed at the time of the occupation, of completely establishing orderly and assured conditions on the Nile, had been fulfilled.

Before I met Count Tornielli to-day I had been able, in a confidential conversation with Lord Rosebery, to assure myself that he has not merely given up his former prejudice against the Italian Representative, but is on the whole satisfied with the attitude of the present Italian Cabinet. He only made one reservation which referred to the advice offered by the Italians at Sofia and Constantinople, which does not seem always to have been happy.

I must add in explanation that the British Foreign Minister has been struck and moreover disquieted by a declaration alleged to have been made by Prince Bismarck to the effect that there was a kind of understanding between Italy and Russia on Eastern affairs, and that Italy was certainly ready to be compliant on these questions in St. Petersburg. Lord Rosebery mentioned this alleged statement of the former Chancellor to me conversationally, in the hope, perhaps, that I should describe it as unfounded. I confined myself to denying all knowledge of the statement, but avoided expressing any reasoned conviction that Italy would under no circumstances refuse a service to the Russian Government on Eastern questions, which did not concern her directly. Quite apart from the fact that former events have given me the impression that Signor Crispi, at any rate, was not disinclined to draw nearer to Russia on the ground mentioned above, I did not think it advisable to put an end entirely to Lord Rosebery's anxieties on this count. If I have been wrong in this, will Your Excellency be so kind as to instruct me? [1]

I cannot at present clear myself of the impression that Lord Rosebery's silently concluded rapprochement towards Italy and her representative in London is partly to be ascribed to these anxieties, and that whilst the Minister realises the political necessity of nearer relations with Italy in general, he is now especially contemplating turning Italy away from undesirable connections in other directions, and with this end in view, gaining for himself a dominant influence in Rome.

VIII. 101

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *May 31st*, 1893

Very confidential.

The Austrian Ambassador called on me yesterday and expressed great appreciation of Lord Rosebery's political attitude,

[1] Cf. despatch of June 3rd, below.

which was considered in Vienna to be entirely satisfactory. During the Ambassador's last visit to Vienna the Emperor Francis Joseph had granted him an Audience, and in touching on this point, had especially remarked that shortly after taking office, Lord Rosebery had at my suggestion been moved to declare openly that he regarded the understanding with Italy and Austria concluded by his predecessor as permanent and binding. He, the Ambassador, had received confirmation of this later from Count Kalnoky, who had, as he understood, got his information from Berlin.

Count Deym added that according to every appearance since, Lord Rosebery is clinging firmly to the views then expressed by him. In a recent conversation the Minister had surprised him by saying frankly that he fully sympathised with and approved the exposition of political views in a speech recently delivered by Sir Augustus Paget at a farewell Banquet in Vienna, which had created a certain sensation in the Press everywhere.

German Note.

The retiring British Ambassador had described Austria as the ' natural ally ' of England.

I should remark here (and my reports of last September will confirm me) that Count Deym is incorrect in imagining that I directed my efforts at that time towards inducing Lord Rosebery to make a special declaration on the understanding existing between Lord Salisbury and *Austria*. Your Excellency will remember that since its conclusion we have always avoided doing Austria's business, unless directly approached by the Austrian Government. I think I am right in saying that this policy was and is still to-day all the more justified, since Austria's political activity in London, never at any time very great, would probably become weaker still, if the Austrian Government could always rely blindly on her interests here being represented by us and on exploiting the personal influence, which I have built up for myself in the course of seven years' hard work.

My Austrian colleague pressed me for my opinion on the correctness of the information given to him in Vienna. I merely replied that, as far as I could remember, I had discussed particularly with Lord Rosebery the understanding with Italy, because it seemed necessary to reassure the Italians regarding the views of the new British Foreign Minister, whereas the same did not appear to me necessary in Vienna, but that the result of those discussions had clearly done good to Austria, since the recognition of Italy under the former British Cabinet was inconceivable without a similar recognition of Austria.

VIII. 102

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *June 3rd*, 1893

In reply to your report of May 26th I beg to state that I am in entire agreement with the attitude adopted by you regarding Lord Rosebery's anxieties concerning a rapprochement between Italy and Russia on questions of Eastern policy. I fully share your view that this anxiety accounts for the British Minister's recent quiet rapprochement towards Italy and her representative in London.

It can only be to our interest if Lord Rosebery continues on this same line to attract Italy's sympathies more and more to the side of England and so aims at drawing Italian policy away from engagements in other directions.

I therefore beg you in your confidential conversations with the Minister to recommend him to cultivate the good relations he has started with Count Tornielli, and to improve them where possible. Whether it is advisable to suggest to Lord Rosebery to enter into fresh negotiations with Count Tornielli regarding the fresh points, you, being on the spot, can best judge.[1] In these negotiations there need now be no thought of German intervention, which was at that time only made necessary by Lord Salisbury's mistrust of Count Tornielli.

VIII. 284

COUNT ZU SOLMS-SONNENWALDE, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *June 9th*, 1893

Extract.

I told Signor Brin to-day how greatly pleased they are in Berlin at the good relations existing between Lord Rosebery and Count Tornielli. Lord Rosebery represents to some extent the view, which is gaining strength more and more amongst the younger British politicians, that England is too weak against France to remain in isolation and that she must seek a rapprochement with other States, i.e., the Triple Alliance. The Minister replied that that was all very well, but England was very reserved, and her co-operation could never be relied on.

Now, for instance, the French were trying to advance further into Tripolis in their delimitation of the frontier between Tunis and Tripolis. It appeared that Turkey was inclined to give in to France. He had enquired of Lord Vivian (Ambassador in Rome) whether England would not be able to make her influence felt in

[1] The Entente-à-trois Agreement of December 12th, 1887. Cf. Vol. I, p. 349 et seq.

Constantinople, whereby the Turkish Government might show active resistance against the French claims in Tripolis. Lord Vivian's reply was that England's influence was at present too small in Constantinople to allow her to use it in this sense. . . .

CHAPTER XVI

THE ARMENIAN QUESTION, 1893–5

[Throughout 1893 and the early part of 1894 the Armenians, who had been obtaining the means to defend themselves, managed to ward off Kurdish attacks, which had been deliberately encouraged by the Turkish Authorities. But in the late summer of 1894 regular troops were sent into Armenia and a series of massacres began.[1] The Powers were no longer able to continue ignoring what was happening in Armenia.

From December, 1894, onwards the more advanced Liberals brought strong pressure on Lord Rosebery and his Government to espouse the cause of Armenia without reference to what the other Powers might be intending. In that month Mr. Gladstone (then in retirement) received an Armenian deputation at Hawarden and made them a long speech on the iniquities of the Turkish treatment of its dependencies (cf. *Annual Register*, 1894, p. [195]). 'Justice for the Christians in the East' became a cry of the Liberal Party, and our relations with other Powers had to be modified in response to it. After Rosebery's Government fell, Mr. Gladstone felt free to conduct a campaign of speeches in the same strain (*Annual Register*, 1895, p. [161]), and this continued the pressure on the new Conservative Government.

In October, 1894, the Emperor dismissed Caprivi and appointed Clodwig Karl Victor, Prince of Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, as Chancellor of the Empire. Henceforward the control of Foreign Affairs fell into the hands of Baron von Marschall and Baron Holstein almost exclusively. (Cf. Sir S. Lee, *King Edward VII*, I, p. 669.) Both of these Foreign Office officials were hostile to England,[2] and hoped to use the Armenian question to drive a wedge between England and Russia, between whom there was to be observed some increase of friendship.]

IX. 197

Count Hatzfeldt to the Chancellor, Count von Caprivi, *March 29th*, 1893

To-day in conversation with Lord Rosebery I remarked in joke that his Armenian friends were getting themselves talked about again. He said that he had received a considerable number of angry letters concerning the treatment of the Armenian

[1] Cf. W. Miller, *The Ottoman Empire*, p. 429; S. H. Jeyes, *Lord Rosebery*, pp. 169, 216 et seq.; J. Holland Rose, *Development of the European Nations*, p. 244.

[2] Count Goluchovski (February, 1898) considered that Marschall was an influence hostile to Great Britain. Cf. Gooch and Temperley, I, p. 44. Also Eckardstein: *Ten Years at the Court of St. James*, p. 105.

bishops by the Turks. I asked him if all this agitation by his countrymen had caused representations to be made to the Porte, and he replied that he had made none. But, in order to protect himself here, he had, without giving definite instructions, recommended Sir Clare Ford to turn his attention to events in Armenia.

He added that it was curious that it was always the left wing of the British Radicals, who were the defenders of the disastrous policy of non-intervention by England in great European questions, and yet were always trying to meddle in the affairs of foreign countries which did not matter to England in the least.[1]

IX. 199

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *October 10th*, 1893

A few days ago the Sultan confessed through Tewfik Pacha here his disquietude at a piece of news in the *Standard*, according to which there was to be a meeting of Armenians in Berlin to discuss the 'Armenian question'. I have had this rumour, which bears the marks of an idle invention, denied at once, and I enclose for your information the text of the *démenti*, which appeared in the *Cologne Gazette*.

The Turkish Ambassador expressed the Sultan's thanks for this, and at the same time mentioned a fresh démarche of Sir Clare Ford's regarding Armenia.

You will gather from the enclosed copy of the record of my conversation with Tewfik Pacha that the Sultan wishes us to persuade the British Government to abstain from raising the question of Armenia.

We are hardly in a position to grant the Sultan's wish in the way that he suggests, seeing that recently in another connection we refused to intervene in any way in the relations between England and Turkey.

Moreover, on the other occasion referred to by the Sultan, the advice we offered in London did not go as far as the Sultan seems now to imagine.

The circumstance, which the Sultan imagines to have happened seven or eight years ago in the time of the Ambassador Goschen, is evidently Lord Dufferin's action in the Armenian question in 1883.

German Note.

On May 8th, 1883, Lord Dufferin, then British Ambassador in Constantinople, during an audience with the Sultan, spoke with emphasis on the Armenian reforms promised under the Cyprus Convention of June 4th, and the Treaty of Berlin of July 13th, 1878, and threatened, in the event of their not being fulfilled, that England would lay her hand finally and firmly on Egypt and consider none but her own interests there.

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[1] Cf. p. 193 et seq.

On that occasion we confined ourselves to refusing all co-operation and all support of the British démarche and indicated to London in a confidential and friendly way our reasons for thinking that Lord Dufferin's action was ill-timed and injurious to British interests in the East. You will find these reasons developed in the enclosed copies of despatches addressed to Count Münster on April 28th, 1882 (*a*), and May 17th, 1883 (*b*).

(*a*) 'If the British Government is committed to the Armenian reforms, we can only, in Prince Bismarck's opinion, request it to deal cautiously with the matter. We for our part could scarcely bring pressure on Turkey's domestic affairs, without losing the Sultan's confidence, which we are careful to cultivate in the interests of European peace.'

(*b*) 'I cannot understand what interest England has in worrying the Sultan. The so-called "Armenian Reforms" are ideal and theoretical aspirations, which were given a good place in the ornamental part of the Congress negotiations, as suitable for Parliamentary consumption. In practice they are of very doubtful importance, whatever may happen, and they are two-edged for the Armenians.

'As we see the situation, it is not a task of British policy to reduce the vitality of the Turkish Empire or to try to loosen the ties that unite Armenia with Turkey. Interference in these domestic affairs of Turkey's would, however, be the best way to attain that end so difficult of attainment.

'In the interests of peace in Europe and quiet in the East I regret Lord Dufferin's démarche, and cannot associate myself with a policy which sacrifices its practical aims for a mere passing philanthropic cloud. As a matter of fact, it will not cause Armenia to be any better governed, or put an end to the Kurdish depredations.'

The reasons given by Count Münster seem to me to apply equally to-day. I am obliged to regard Sir Clare Ford's démarche as particularly unfortunate just at the moment when the Sultan has been upset by recent events both in Armenia itself and by the Armenian debates in the British Parliament. The readiness, which the Sultan has shown, to meet any claims brought by England in respect of individual Armenians, is bound to make him sensitive at the raising of the whole Armenian question in principle by England. As the Sultan himself says, it would in fact be difficult for him, with the best will in the world, to introduce 'reforms' in Armenia. The partly justified complaints of the Armenians would hardly be relieved by these paper 'reforms'. They lie deep in the whole system of Turkish administration, which, as long as Turkey exists, can never be altered in essence. The grievances under which the Armenians are suffering, are in

part merely the natural reaction against the unrestrained agitation of the Armenian Committees in London, who, being in a safe spot themselves, and not caring how they compromise their countrymen at home, irritate the Sultan and his officials and fill them with suspicions, not altogether unjustified.

In spite of all these reasons, which speak against the wisdom of the latest acts of the British Ambassador in Constantinople, we, as I said before, are not in a position to grant the Sultan's desire for our official intervention in London. However, I beg you to bring Sir Clare Ford's latest démarche under discussion on a suitable opportunity and ascertain whether he was actually instructed to act at this precise moment. You will remember how in 1886 Sir Edward Thornton sent the Sultan a note about Armenia at an equally unfavourable moment. It turned out that the Ambassador had received it from Lord Dufferin for use ' at a suitable opportunity ', so that the Ambassador alone was to blame for the choice of the unfavourable moment.

I leave it to your discretion to decide whether you think it possible and useful to let fall a few words as to the impression which the démarche has already made on the Sultan, and the risk of driving the Sultan, who is already estranged from England on account of Egypt, more and more into the anti-British camp, without effecting any practical result from the purely humanitarian point of view. It will depend on the reception obtained by the words used by you in this sense, whether you proceed to develop the views contained in the despatches of 1882 and 1883.

German Note.

Sir Edward Thornton's note, which, according to Radowitz' report of August 23rd, was delivered to the Porte on August 16th, 1886 [immediately after Lord Salisbury's return to power], declared in a rather peremptory tone that Turkey had not fulfilled the promises of 1878, that in the meantime conditions in the Armenian provinces had become worse, and that it was now high time, in the interests of the Sultan and the Turkish Empire, to start seriously to remove the great abuses by choosing, in particular, better Governors. (Cf. Vol. I, p. 250.)

IX. 201

Prince von Radolin, in Constantinople, to the Chancellor, Prince von Hohenlohe, *November 16th*, 1894

During the Audience granted me on my return from leave to-day, the Sultan mentioned the fresh outbreak of unrest in Armenia and related the events in detail, as reported to him, in order to enable me, as he said, to refute any tendentious distortions of the real facts.

His Majesty had been informed that Armenian agitators in the neighbourhood of Sassun, south of Lake Van, had been inciting the Armenian population not to pay the taxes and to commit acts

of violence against the Musulmans and the authorities. The Armenians had banded together and made a regular stand against the Turkish authorities. The Armenians had been guilty of very cruel acts, mutilated unarmed Turks and murdered them with powder, which they ignited. The object of the Armenians was apparently, first to irritate the Turks by their excesses and, when the latter resisted, to raise a cry of persecution, and so arouse the pity of Europe and especially of the British, if the Imperial troops were forced to restore order by armed intervention.

A repetition of the so-called 'Bulgarian atrocities' was a means desired by the Armenians to try and achieve a certain measure of independence, like the Balkan nations. But, said the Sultan, the difference in Asia Minor was that the Armenians were not a self-contained nation and had no right to expect autonomy. They had, moreover, he added, been encouraged in their rebellious attitude by the fact that the British Consul, resident at Van, had been travelling from place to place, ostensibly to study the people and country, and by appearing among them, had aroused in the excited imaginations of the Armenians a belief that he sympapathised with them and their movement.

There was also a wide-spread conviction amongst the Armenians that the Red Coats (the British) were soon coming to free the land.

The Sultan further informed me that various Armenians, dressed as Turks, had been taken, who as *agents provocateurs* committed outrage and murder against their own countrymen, in order to bring the Turks into contempt and irritate the population against them. (The EMPEROR: '*?*') He had ordered these people to be brought to judgment in their disguise.

Moreover, the names of *Turks* who were supposed to have killed a number of Armenians had been supplied to the British Ambassador; whereas he, the Sultan, was in a position to prove to the Ambassador that these very named Turks had been murdered by the Armenians, so that that accusation was refuted.

His Majesty further assured me that there was no truth in the tendentious report that the troops under Marshal Zeki Pacha had massacred thousands of Armenians. That was a malevolent slander. (The EMPEROR: '*!*') The Sultan was intending to send a Commission composed of reliable men to the Sassun district in order to ascertain the truth and to punish the guilty in an exemplary manner, if there had really been excesses by the troops.[1]

He had heard also that the British Ambassador, Sir Philip

[1] This Commission was demanded by Great Britain. See Miller's *Ottoman Empire*, p. 429.

Currie, wished to send his Military Attaché, Colonel Chermside, to Armenia to verify the conditions reported by the British Consul at Van. This he could not allow, for the appearance of a British officer would cause a flare-up of insurrection amongst the Armenians, who would take it for official support by England. (The EMPEROR: '*That does not matter. It will force England to show her hand.*')

I permitted myself to remark to His Majesty that the Armenians had been attempting for a long time to arouse interest, especially in England, by means of agitation and revolutionary movements, but that the local Turkish authorities had unfortunately a bad reputation for driving the people to desperation, in order to prove to His Majesty their merits in suppressing the unrest resulting from their action. It would be advisable for His Majesty to appoint persons of better reputation to carry out his good intentions and to require his troops and their leaders to observe the greatest care in handling the excited population, so as to nip the revolutionary movements in the bud and deprive foreign Powers of their excuse for intervening in favour of the Armenians. (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*')

Although His Majesty tried to convince me that his civil and military authorities were incapable of either eye-service or cruelty, I still hope that my warning may not have gone entirely for nothing. But unfortunately the spy system and delation are so deeply rooted here, that none of the really honest and reliable officials and generals can possibly force a way through it and continue to keep the Sultan's confidence without being traduced.

Owing to this Armenian revolutionary movement, which has been constantly growing for a number of years, there is always the danger that the British, on the one hand, on the strength of the Cyprus Convention, and the Russians, on the other, on account of the nearness of their own Armenian provinces, may finally take this question up seriously and demand its settlement in the interests of the Armenians. But now that the Sultan has most solemnly sworn to me that under no circumstances will he give way to the unjust pressure of the Armenians, and would rather die than introduce reforms giving further autonomy, it is possible that there might arise between him and the interested Powers a serious and incalculable complication, which might re-open the whole Eastern question.

At the end of this conversation the Sultan begged me to communicate the above to the Emperor, for whom he cherished the most genuine feeling of friendship and confidence, and to request him to convince the Queen of England of the groundlessness of the Armenian complaints (The EMPEROR: '*The devil I will!*') and to use his influence in the name of justice, so that she and her

Government may abstain from taking the part of so dangerous a revolutionary element, which is bound finally to disturb peace and equilibrium. (The EMPEROR: '*If the Britons want to burn their fingers, I shall not stop them.*')

I replied that it was neither the Queen of England nor her Government that felt this special sympathy for Armenia, but a number of influential Members of Parliament, whom the Government could not afford to disregard; thus there was nothing to gain by approaching the Queen in the sense desired by the Sultan. Better administration of the Armenian provinces would conduce far more than anything else to restore order and take the strength out of the complaints and grievances of the Armenians. (The EMPEROR: '*Correct.*')

IX. 204

PRINCE VON RADOLIN, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *November 23rd*, 1894

I have already had the honour to report to Your Highness that the Sultan has decided to send a special Commission to Armenia to enquire into the events in Sassun, which have been so often commented on in the Press. The British Ambassador has signified his approval of this and no longer insists on sending a Commissioner of his own.

The Commission is now appointed by the Sultan, and consists of Abdullah Pacha, General of Division, Hafiz Tewfik Pacha, Brigadier-General, and Omer Bey, the Director of the Savings Bank.

Both these Generals, the first of whom was assigned to General von der Goltz, have served three years in the Prussian Army and enjoy a good reputation. Omer Bey also is said to be an honest official. Nothing had been settled as to the date of the Commission's departure. The British Embassy thought there were grounds for supposing that its departure would be delayed on every kind of excuse, now that the Porte appeared to have escaped the danger of a British Commissioner being sent. Sir Philip Currie has, therefore, declared to the Sultan in the name of his Government, that the Commission must start by Sunday, the 25th, at latest; otherwise Colonel Chermside will be ordered to proceed forthwith to Armenia. Public opinion in England, says Sir Philip, is so much aroused by reports of the events at Sassun, that the Government, in order to set itself right before Parliament, will have to demonstrate the interest it has taken in the matter.

Rustem Pacha (in London) reports that Lord Kimberley (Foreign Minister) spoke to him in the same sense and indicated

that the Cabinet's existence would be endangered, unless the Sultan gave him the material for reassuring public opinion.

The British Ambassador's demand was drawn up in a very conciliatory form. He declared to the Sultan that England does not desire to make difficulties for him on account of the Armenians, difficulties from which other States, not England, would reap advantages ; and that it is to his interest to take measures of his own initiative, and so remove the feeling against Turkey, that is prevalent in Europe.

I hear that the Sultan has given orders for the Commission to set out on its journey even before next Sunday.

IX. 205–6

PRINCE VON RADOLIN, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *November 28th*, 1894

The Turkish Commission of enquiry into the events at Sassun, about which I reported on the 23rd, which was instituted under pressure from the British, set off yesterday for its destination, reinforced by some officers and a Ulema. The Sultan was undecided until the last moment, and it is due to the Foreign Minister's insistency alone that the Commission started at all. Said Pacha admitted in confidence that he breathes more easily now that the Members of the Commission are actually on board. He did not promise much for its activity, but he thought that the Porte would thus gain time, and that the rising about which British public opinion was so disturbed, might die down in the meantime.

Meanwhile the Porte has published a communication in the Press (cuttings enclosed) qualifying the events at Sassun as acts of robbery on the part of the Armenians there, and representing the Commission's terms of reference as an enquiry into the Armenian methods of robbery.

As soon as Lord Kimberley was informed of this official communication—by a telegram yesterday from Rustem Pacha—he sent immediately for the Turkish Ambassador and declared to him in categorical terms that according to the terms of reference the task of the Commission was quite different from that demanded by England. Public opinion was therefore highly incensed against Turkey, and he was being urged from all quarters to publish the Consular reports on conditions in Armenia and the recent events there. Up to now he had hesitated to do so, in order to spare the Porte any embarrassment, and he had not wished to make use of England's rights secured by treaty. Now, however, he could no longer withstand the pressure. The Porte's unskilful handling of the matter was forcing the British Govern-

ment to depart from the reserve which it had imposed on itself. Certain States were already beginning to pay attention to the Armenian question, and he foresaw that this hitherto domestic Turkish question would soon become a European one. By agreement with Lord Rosebery, the Cabinet had been summoned to discuss England's future attitude, and its decisions would entail very extensive results for Turkey.

Rustem Pacha says also in his telegram that he tried to explain Turkey's attitude, but Lord Kimberley refused all discussion with the remark that it would be sheer waste of time.

Rustem Pacha's report has had a depressing effect on the Porte and Said Pacha in particular. In his gloomy mood he said confidentially that it was the maladministration of the Turkish officials that had produced these conditions in Armenia. He had repeatedly told the Sultan that, if there was no turn for the better in this respect, Russia, with or without a European mandate, would seize the Armenian provinces of Turkey for the sake of her own security if only to produce order there. If this happened, it will mean that this part of the Empire would be lost beyond repair, in spite of the numerous Marshals who surround the Sultan. At Yildiz, unluckily, they prefer to listen to the advice of wretched sycophants rather than to the Porte's suggestions, and he regretted to have to say that in his efforts he was not depending on the Grand Vizir (Djevad Pacha), who gave more thought to the Sultan's favour than to the interests of the Empire.

To-day the Sultan sent Salih Munir Bey, the General Secretary of the Foreign Office, to tell me confidentially of Rustem Pacha's telegram and to beg the Imperial Government to refrain from action, supposing any of the Powers should start negotiations with the Porte concerning the Armenian question. I replied to the Sultan's envoy that the Emperor's feelings of friendship for the Sultan's person were known. In questions affecting the East the Imperial Government had never taken the first step, but had rather left it for the Powers directly interested, and had been careful to maintain a reserve, imbued with a high-minded interest in Turkey's welfare. (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*') My personal view of the present matter was that the Sultan's good intentions, of which there was no doubt, had been faultily carried out by his officials. If impartial justice were applied to all equally, the question could be settled at once. I could not help wondering, however, whether the officials at the head of the administration of the Asiatic frontier provinces, were the right men to carry out the Sultan's orders. To name only one instance, I had read a few days before of the appointment of Bahri Pacha as Governor-General of Kharput (Mamuret ul Aziz). This Bahri Pacha had been dismissed from being Governor of Pera, because he had

been connected with a gang of counterfeit coiners. (The EMPEROR: '!') Again, in the autumn of 1890, when he was Governor of the Asiatic suburb of Scutari, England had demanded his dismissal and punishment, because he had let out of prison and hidden in his house the Kurdish Chieftain, Moussa Bey, who was notorious for his cruelty to the Armenians and was a relation of Bahri Pacha.[1] If such a man was set to govern an Armenian province at this moment, it could not be wondered at that British public opinion felt this to be a slap in the face and was forcing the Government to go further than the latter might itself wish. I was not called upon to mix myself in these matters and begged the Sultan to believe that I had allowed myself to be persuaded to express an opinion merely out of personal interest for him, and because he had invited me to do so, by sending one who possessed his confidence.

I am convinced that the Sultan's intimate circle is too blind and himself too much under its influence for there to be a chance of any improvement of the conditions. My object in going so much into detail with his envoy, was merely to anticipate any further wishes that might be submitted to us. (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*')

Sir Philip Currie is naturally very angry and worried at the turn affairs have taken, but I feel I must bear witness that he is calmly and wisely doing his utmost to prevent the Porte and Yildiz from committing further errors. (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*')

IX. 208

PRINCE VON RADOLIN, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *November 30th*, 1894

Cipher telegram.

I have heard from the Sultan that yesterday's Cabinet meeting in London decided to direct an energetic protest to the Porte, because, according to the Turkish official communiqué, the Armenian Commission is instructed to conduct an enquiry against Armenian malefactors and not, as England demanded, to bring to justice all the guilty civil and military authorities. A note is in contemplation which will formulate further British demands with regard to the Armenians. The British Ambassador had declared, as his personal opinion, that immediate dismissal of the Governors of the Armenian provinces and the appointment of an impartial Commission of enquiry, which, with the assistance of the British Consuls, should submit its findings to the Signatory Powers, would be the proper method of anticipating this note. The Sultan wishes to wait first for the report of the Commission

[1] Moussa Bey had been brought to the Capital for trial.

which has already been sent, before making his decision, and begs that if England should propose joint measures against the Porte, the Imperial Government may observe a benevolent attitude towards himself. I replied politely that an improvement in the notoriously bad administration of the border provinces would most further the Sultan's interests.

My report on the state of the question is already despatched.

IX. 209

THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, TO PRINCE VON RADOLIN, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, *December 1st*, 1894

Telegram.

Your telegram of November 30th received.

A benevolent attitude regarding the events at Sassun, as desired by the Sultan, could only be considered in so far as we were able to declare the additional measures taken by the Porte to be sufficient. A mere enquiry directed against Armenian malefactors would by no means answer this purpose.

So far we do not know here whether the question of Sassun will lead to the realisation of the Anglo-Russian undertaking, outlined in Lord Rosebery's Guildhall Speech and elsewhere.[1] It is far from impossible, especially if the Turkish measures are and remain merely a pretext for covering up the past. I beg you to make use of the above fully, but confidentially, in whatever way you may think best.

IX. 209–10

PRINCE VON RADOLIN, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *December 5th*, 1894

The Sultan has recently sent one of his confidants, Munir Bey, to see me several times to keep me informed of the course of the Armenian affair and to assure me again and again that all that is published in the British Press about Turkish excesses against the Armenians is false, but on the contrary the Armenians have been guilty of attacking and murdering the Musulmans. Yesterday the Sultan sent me his Chamberlain, Raghib Bey, especially instructed to tell me that the British Ambassador had expressed himself in agreement with the Sultan's proposals to send the American Consul-General to Sassun, as an impartial judge of the events there, that is, assuming the United States Government approved. Raghib Bey said that the British Ambassador had proposed sending the two British Consuls at Erzerum and Van to the districts in revolt, in order to ascertain the real state of affairs together with the Commission that had been sent. At the

[1] On November 4th, 1894.

Sultan's emphatic protest against sending Englishmen because the Armenians would thereby be encouraged to resist, Sir Philip Currie allowed himself to be persuaded to accept the above-mentioned proposal. (The EMPEROR: '*!*')

In the most impressive manner I repeated to Raghib Bey what I had already said to Munir—that if Turkey continued to make use only of half measures and would not punish relentlessly all the guilty, whether Turks or Armenians, and if she would not boldly get rid of all the notoriously bad Governors and Generals in the provinces, and replace them with reliable officials (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*')—of whom there were still plenty—she would not only fail to suppress the rising, and lose all the sympathy of Europe, but would finally lose the provinces. It concerned the existence of Turkey. Having lost all Roumelia by its stupidity, the Government would in time lose most of Asia Minor. The Russians could not permit disturbances like those at Sassun to continue for a long period on their frontier. For the sake of quiet at home they would be obliged to seize the frontier and perhaps move forward into Turkish territory in order to maintain order there. At first a friendly occupation, it would finally become permanent.

The events on the frontier would extend to the interior, with the unavoidable addition of Armenian unrest. At the same time there would be the fear of grave disturbances in Syria among the Arabs, who are hostile to the Turkish Government. I certainly knew by experience that French propaganda had been active and successful.

The above would inevitably be the results of unskilful treatment of the present disturbances in Armenia. I begged him, Raghib Bey, to put all this plainly before His Majesty as my answer to his request for advice, and to emphasise the point that serious measures should be taken to prove to Europe the firm intention of the Sultan's Government to improve conditions, and to be just to *all* his subjects without distinction of race or creed. I would not touch on the question of who had provoked the present rising, the Armenians or the Turks. One thing, however, was clear, that if insupportable conditions did not result as a consequence of the bad administration in those parts, the soil would be less favourable than it is, for the revolutionary ideas, which the Armenian Committees abroad are introducing amongst the peaceful and oppressed people of those mountain districts.

The Armenians there should not be confused with those of the capital and the large towns, who really needed no consideration. The inhabitants of the interior were harmless people who only asked that their property and lives should be spared; in other respects they lived in harmony with the Musulmans. The

perpetual exactions of the local authorities had thrown them into a state of despair, so that they suffered themselves to be led astray by the revolutionary suggestions of political agitators. I did not doubt that the Armenians had also been guilty of acts of violence and even outrage, but I could not believe that the Turkish troops also had not played cruel havoc, as had been reported to the Sultan.

I was sure that His Majesty was inspired by the best, humanest and most just intentions, but unfortunately experience showed that they had been very badly carried out, and that the Sultan was never informed of the truth. His Majesty knew that no European Government was as disinterested in this question as the German, and that if I permitted myself to use such outspoken language, it was purely in the interests of His Majesty and the maintenance of his Empire, which seemed to me in serious danger. (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*')

If I know Raghib Bey, he will certainly repeat to the Sultan what I said.

My warning to Munir Pacha has, I think, been successful, for the idea of appointing the notorious Bahri Pacha to Bitlis has been given up. He has been ordered to report himself sick and ask for leave to retire. I hope that His Majesty will follow the well-meant advice and authorise still more changes in the administrative personnel. The readiness with which Sir Philip Currie agreed to the proposal of the Sultan to allow the American Consuls to attend the Commission, instead of the British Consuls, proves once again that England does not intend to obstruct a definite solution of the question, and that what she wants is a success, if only an apparent one, to use for coping with the Government's domestic difficulties—Parliament and the Press.

The Russian Chargé d'Affaires informed me that England had tried to induce the St. Petersburg Government to take joint action with her in the Armenian question, but had met with no inclination to do so—at least for the moment. How far this opinion is correct, I cannot judge from here.

In the Yildiz Palace it is believed that the British Ambassador wishes to use this opportunity to obtain, as an indemnity for England's moderation in the Armenian question, an extension of the Smyrna–Aidin Railway, which is in British hands. I will not deny that this Turkish assumption seems to me to have foundation, for Sir Philip Currie misses no opportunity of saying to me in a very bitter tone, that England can never forgive us for having pushed her to one side and taken her place in railway construction in Asia Minor, a place which she regarded as hers by right.[1]

[1] Cf. p. 180.

IX. 213

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE,
December 12th, 1894

Yesterday in conversation, the Foreign Secretary [1] himself began on the Armenian question. He said that he thought it important to keep me continuously informed of the state of affairs, so far as he knew it himself.

He mentioned that he had turned only to Russia and France, because they were the only Powers with Consuls at Erzerum. He said that the Russian Ambassador in Constantinople,[2] to whom he, Lord Kimberley, had instructed Sir Philip Currie to make the overture, had not agreed at once, but had expressed certain reasons against Russia's participation. No definite reply had come to London from St. Petersburg so far, which, according to a statement made by Count Kapnist [3] to Sir Frank Lascelles, the British Ambassador, was to be ascribed to the fact that M. de Giers is very ill and unable for the moment to make a decision.

It appeared to me that the Minister spoke of the French reply with some embarrassment (The EMPEROR : '*He is nervous about the friendship.*'), and used many words in speaking of its friendly tone. This torrent of words gave me the impression that the French Government qualifies its consent by certain reserves regarding the Russian participation.

The Minister said to me again this time that the British Cabinet would be forced to do something, since public opinion was deeply moved by the news received from Armenia. The British Consul at Erzerum was therefore going at once to the spot, but would not be a member of the Turkish Commission. He was to have the right to examine the witnesses independently and report to his Government. The Minister did not seem to know yet, whether the Sultan had agreed to these conditions.

To-day I still have the impression that the British Cabinet desires no complications in the East, which might lead to re-opening the Eastern question and the further weakening of Turkey, and that it would be glad to escape from the embarrassment with the help of even a semi-satisfactory report from the British Consul, who will be present with the Commission. It might, of course, turn out differently, if Russia accepted the British proposal and associated herself with the British Consul's enquiry. There would then, I think, be the risk of Russia's taking the lead, and England would, willy-nilly, have to follow the course in favour of the Armenians, once it was begun, if she

[1] Lord Kimberley. [2] A. Nelidoff.
[3] Head of the Asiatic Department in the Russian Foreign Office.

does not wish at once to risk losing her new friendship with Russia.

In this connection I think that I may mention a confidential utterance by my Turkish colleague. A few days ago he developed the view that any further extension of the Armenian question, which would further the object of setting up an autonomous province of Armenia, would not at all represent the desires and interests of Russia. If the Armenians obtained an independent administration, they would no longer have a reason for seeking Russia's assistance and goodwill, and the latter would have to expect resistance from them if later she did anything for her own account in Asia Minor. Russia had made what was since realised to be a blunder in European Turkey, in creating an independent Bulgaria, and it could not be expected that she would repeat the same blunder for the sake of the Armenians.

(The EMPEROR : '*Correct.—It is moreover evident how quickly the new Anglo-Russian friendship is being threatened with complications, and how strong is the coefficient of friction.*')

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT MÜNSTER, IN PARIS, *December 14th*, 1894

For your information. We are informed that Russia is meeting with coolness and suspicion England's attempts to draw her into the Armenian question. England is endeavouring to arrange for joint action in combination with Russia and France.

IX. 215

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *December 18th*, 1894

Extract. Secret.

Baron Blanc told me in conversation that he had heard privately from Constantinople that there is talk there of the possibility of a Russian occupation of Turkish Armenia. The Foreign Minister added that he saw nothing to object to in such an eventuality. He had nothing against the Russians spreading themselves over those districts. He thought them better fitted than the British to restore order and peace in Armenia.

It is becoming ever clearer that Baron Blanc, in face of British policy, which is departing from every British tradition, is trying to draw nearer to Russia. . . .

IX. 215–6

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, *December 19th*, 1894

Telegram. Extract.

. . . We learn from various mutually corroborating sources

in England that Rosebery's Cabinet will probably fall within the next six months. The aimless groping round of the present Government in foreign politics will greatly contribute to discredit it.

Italy, who will certainly enjoy more importance in Eastern affairs if united with England, will therefore do well not to destroy the bridge for future co-operation with England for the sake of Armenia.

The signs that we so far know of, do not indicate that Russia is pursuing great aims in Armenia at present. . . .

IX. 219

PRINCE VON RADOLIN, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *December 20th*, 1894

As far as I can make out from here, judging merely from the course of the negotiations which have taken place between Sir P. Currie and M. de Nelidoff and have led to the despatch of the Consuls to Erzerum, no understanding has yet been reached between England and Russia on what is to be done to prevent the recurrence of unrest in Armenia.

England evidently desires some such understanding, and even Russia seems inclined for it, if advantages are to be expected from it, which are unattainable in any other way.

I am informed from a reliable British source that the British Cabinet is considering an understanding with Russia in this matter, on the basis of a friendly advance by Russian troops into Turkish territory to restore order in the disturbed regions. In return Russia would engage to assist England in Egypt, by deterring France from hindering the consolidation of British power there.

My informant could not enlighten me on the essential point whether France was to be allowed political compensation for this. The Russian Ambassador's decidedly unfavourable attitude to the Italian wish to take part in the enquiry might be explained by the prospect of a possible understanding on this basis.

When the time came, M. de Nelidoff might wish to prevent the inclusion in the Commission of another Power, which in the later arrangements might claim advantages for itself.

If it suits the aims of our policy not to oppose the schemes, which England and Russia may agree upon, we can let these two States alone and allow them to make their own settlement at Turkey's expense. But if we do not wish this, I humbly suggest that it should be considered whether it might not be advisable to try and arrange that, if not all, at least a majority of the Signatory Powers take part in the Armenian question and in the Commission of enquiry dealing with it.

I assume that this is the Italian point of view also, since they themselves wish to be represented on the Commission. . . .

XI. 221–2

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, *December 30th*, 1894

Telegram.

The Imperial Ambassador in Constantinople telegraphs:

'The Italian Ambassador has just informed me that Said Pacha has made to him the following official communication:—As an understanding regarding the enquiry in Armenia has been arrived at between four Powers, Turkey, Russia, England and France, none of these by herself may admit any other Power to participate.—Said Pacha added very confidentially that France and Russia had declared to the Porte, that if it allowed Italy to be admitted to the Commission, they would both withdraw from it. . . .'

IX. 223

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO THE AMBASSADORS IN ROME AND VIENNA, *January 8th*, 1895

I enclose you a copy of a report of January 3rd by the Imperial Ambassador in London and a cutting from the *Standard* of the same day, which discusses the impression that a joint undertaking against Turkey by England and Russia would make on Queen Victoria's Mohamedan subjects.

The *Standard* article is not without interest as an indication of feeling, for it shows that the possibility is not excluded, that, in consideration of the Empress of India's fifty million Mohamedan subjects, the Queen of England is perhaps coming to the conclusion that England may be better advised in keeping friendly with Turkey than in combining with Russia against Turkey.

As far as it concerns us, we think that we can look on at the development of things without anxiety. We still cannot believe in a Triple Agreement—including France—as we think it impossible for England to be ready or able to grant such concessions as would satisfy Russia and France, whilst the Triple Alliance would probably not find it hard to deal with a dual entente—excluding France.

IX. 224

PRINCE VON RADOLIN, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *April 17th*, 1895

The Sultan took leave of me to-day (on my appointment to St. Petersburg). . . .

His Majesty said (in private Audience) that he had heard to his astonishment that an American war-ship had appeared before Beirout with the alleged purpose of saving the inhabitants of Asia Minor who were under American protection from an approaching massacre. This unfounded rumour must have been put about by the Armenians in order to revive the sympathy of the Powers, and especially of America. The American Minister had himself been forced to admit that there was no reason to fear such a danger.

I took this opportunity of mentioning the Armenian disturbances and spoke in the sense of my instructions. In substance what I said was this:

The Imperial Government deplored the difficulties that the Sultan had had with certain Powers with regard to the Armenians, and that he had been held responsible for the conditions there. As representative of a friendly Power, which only had his welfare at heart, I could express my conviction that it was not necessary to introduce fresh reforms for the Empire or any parts of it. The existing organisation and laws were sufficient for the needs of the country, and nothing mattered except that they should be carried out exactly, according to the constant wish of the Sultan. Unfortunately it could not be denied that the choice of officials for the provinces had not always been a happy one, and it could not be wondered at that errors had been committed, which had found expression in public disorder. To prevent such things happening in future, and not only to win the good will of the population, but also to remove from the interested Powers any excuse for interfering, the surest way would be to concentrate all attention on the official personnel. It seemed clear, therefore, that he ought to entrust certain of his Ministers with the task of submitting to him the most suitable individuals for administering the provinces. Then if complaints against these officials arose on the score of persecution, he could make those Ministers responsible who had recommended them and even prosecute them; thus the sacred person of the Sovereign would rise superior to all accusations, and the responsibility would rest on his Ministers.

His Majesty listened to my exposition with much interest and evident favour, but when he tried to give me an answer, he said with some embarrassment that there was always talk of the 'Palace's' interference with the affairs of the 'Porte', whilst the fact was that all appointments emanated from the Cabinet. (I must remark that this unfortunately is not the case, and that it is but rarely that the Porte succeeds in getting its nominations accepted by the Sultan.)

Later in the conversation the Sultan said that he knew well that the advice I offered had been given to me from an interested

Turkish side. He had already noticed that individuals whom he had for 20 years cared for as his children and entrusted with high Office, were aiming at setting up a kind of Regency beside him. He was not going to submit to this, and meant immediately to see to it that such intrigues came to nothing.

I perceived that the Sultan referred to the Grand Vizir,[1] who had recently repeatedly asked leave to retire, because he could no longer, as an honourable soldier and servant of his Sovereign, bear the responsibility for what was done without his sanction, without compromising himself in the eyes of Europe and his own country. . . .

His Majesty became calmer, and the conversation turned to other subjects. He surprised me with the news that he meant, on the occasion of my departure, this evening to promote von der Goltz and Kamphövener Pacha and decorate several officials of the Imperial Embassy and Consulate-General,—also Gühler, the Commander of S.M.F. *Lorelei*.

In spite of these attentions, it is my impression that the Sultan cannot be rescued from his blindness, and that he will continue, as before, to govern the provinces through creatures recommended to him by his entourage. . . .

IX. 227

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO THE EMPEROR WILLIAM II, *May 12th*, 1895

Your Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires in Constantinople reports that His Majesty the Sultan has instructed the Royal Prussian Steuerrat Bertram, Turkish Under-Secretary of State for Indirect Taxation, who is coming to Germany on leave, to submit the following to Your Majesty in the Sultan's name : (The EMPEROR : '*Have no time for seeing the man.*')

'England, France and Russia are, during the coming week, about to propose to the Porte certain reforms in the Armenian provinces of Asia Minor. The Turkish Government is prepared to meet justifiable demands. But if these Great Powers express desires, the fulfilment of which is contrary to the Sultan's sovereign rights or Turkish State interests, the Sultan begs Your Majesty to allow Your influence to be used with these States, so that they may abstain from making unfair demands.' (The EMPEROR : '*I should not think of doing so.*')

I humbly permit myself to comment to Your Majesty as follows :

In a marginal note to the report of March 26th, which I again enclose, Your Majesty graciously approved that Prince Radolin, at his farewell Audience with the Sultan, should repeat in the

[1] Djevad Pacha.

form of friendly advice, offered by Your Majesty's Government, the warnings which the Ambassador had already, whenever an opportunity offered, indicated to the Sultan—that the maladministration of his officials was the cause of the wide-spread discontent in general, as also of the conditions in Armenia in particular, and had pointed to the dangers threatening the Turkish Empire from these causes.

As a consequence, Prince Radolin seized the opportunity offered by his farewell Audience, in a suitable manner to call the Sultan's attention once again to the conditions in Armenia, but he found the Sultan quite impervious to his arguments. . . .

German Note.

On May 11th, 1895, the Ambassadors of Great Britain, France and Russia forwarded to the Porte a Note containing proposals of reform for the six Vilayets in Eastern Anatolia. [For the text see *British and Foreign State Papers*, 1895.]

IX. 230

COUNT HENCKEL VON DONNERSMARCK, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE,

May 25th, 1895

. . . The Sultan referred the Note of the Ambassadors to the Reforms Commission for examination and at the same time demanded an opinion on the question from various officials of the Palace and the Porte, who are in his confidence. Without committing themselves on the material side, all those whose opinions have been asked, say that something must be done to escape from the present difficulty. A few days ago for the first time the Sultan took the Ministers into consultation. Since then the latter have held long daily meetings in Yildiz, but have not yet come to a decision.

As far as I hear, the Ministers' objections are directed chiefly against the demand for a five-yearly term for the Governors and the engagement to consult the Powers before the completion of any appointment. . . .

Two days ago the British Ambassador informed his Russian and French colleagues in writing that in consideration of the Turkish delay in replying to the three Powers' proposals, he had been instructed by his Government to demand, jointly with the other two Ambassadors, the appointment of a European High Commissioner for the provinces in Asia Minor.[1] The two Ambassadors, Cambon and Nelidoff, have replied to Sir Philip Currie, that this demand goes beyond the terms of the agreements concluded between the three Cabinets, and that without definite

[1] Cf. S. H. Jeyes, *Lord Rosebery*, p. 171.

instructions from their Governments they could not fall in with the British proposal.

To-day the British Ambassador declared to the Sultan and the Porte that England could no longer wait for the Turkish Government's statement and must demand an immediate reply, accepting or rejecting the note. The Sultan at once summoned the Council of Ministers to Yildiz, and the Ministers are assembled there at this moment. I hear confidentially that the Sultan has received news that a strong British squadron has been ordered to proceed to Turkish waters. If this is correct, it may be safely assumed that the Sultan will at the eleventh hour give way on all points under the pressure of foreign war-ships in his neighbourhood.

This possibility is regarded with displeasure on the French and Russian side, since both Embassies feel that the credit of having solved the problem will fall to England alone.

IX. 231

The same and the same, June 3rd, 1895

The Turkish reply to the joint note of England, France and Russia on the administrative reforms contemplated for the Armenian provinces of Asia Minor which was expected on May 29th, is in the form of a note from the Porte. The document is in Turkish and is to be handed in at the three Embassies to-night. In it the Porte refuses to discuss the essential points in the reform proposals.

The fact of the reply being now ready must be ascribed to the British Ambassador's insistence. He had been informed by the Turks, notwithstanding the promise of an early reply, that the Festival of Bairam must be celebrated, before the reform proposals could be replied to.

This demand aroused, as I have said, violent protests on England's part, whilst the Russian Embassy did not take the Turkish attempt at evasion so much to heart. France has in the last days attached herself to England in a remarkable way. It is an open question whether they are thinking in Paris that in future an increase of Russian influence in Syria may not be agreeable to French interests there, or whether France is determined not to be behind England in the East as the Protector of Christendom.

The three Ambassadors are now deliberating on the next step to be taken.

The Mediterranean squadron has arrived at Beirout from Alexandria and it is asserted at the Porte that it has received orders to sail northwards.

German Note.

The Mediterranean squadron, under the command of Admiral Sir Michael Culme-Seymour, sailed from Alexandria on June 3rd and anchored before Beirout. The order to sail was telegraphed from London.

From observations on the attitude of England and Russia towards the Armenian question up to the present, it is shown clearly that the former fully realises and is working for the maintenance of the integrity of Turkey's authority in Asia Minor. The Sultan can only establish his power in Asia Minor by setting up a good administration. Not until the members of the various nationalities living in Asia Minor show that they are contented with the Sultan's domination, can it be said that there is any bulwark there against the Russian pressure, which had weakened Turkey for centuries.

At present the spectacle of Turkey's work of self-destruction can only be a secret pleasure to Russia. But she must not openly show her joy at the sad state of Asia Minor. That is why the St. Petersburg Cabinet is working with the London one here. Nevertheless, the hope will continue to prevail in Russia of inducing Turkey, by secret encouragement, to resist the British warnings, and of seeing them finally come to nothing. (The EMPEROR: '*Correct.*')

IX. 232

PRINCE VON RADOLIN, IN ST. PETERSBURG, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *June 10th*, 1895

A few days ago, when it was known that the Sultan had rejected the plans for reform in Armenia, I met the British Ambassador and Prince Lobanoff at the Club. The latter spoke of it with some indifference, and Sir Frank Lascelles [1] whispered to me rather bitterly: 'We have to thank the Russians for this, for they pretend to work with us, but are secretly helping the Sultan.'

Just recently the British Ambassador has appeared rather irritated against Russia, as also against Prince Lobanoff, with whom he used to be rather friendly.

German Note.

Djevad Pacha, Grand Vizir since 1891, retired on June 6th and was succeeded by Said Pacha, who thus entered on his fifth term of Office. Turkhan Pacha became Minister of Foreign Affairs in Said Pacha's place.

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[1] British Ambassador in St. Petersburg.

IX. 233

COUNT HENCKEL VON DONNERSMARCK, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *June 16th*, 1895

Extract.

. . . The object of putting the Ex-Grand Vizir Said Pacha in Djevad's place was, of course, to carry out the policy proposed by the latter. But having succeeded in overthrowing Djevad and taking his place, Said at once sought means to avoid breaking with the Powers. On meeting Sir Philip Currie for the first time, he adopted a fairly conciliatory tone and asked for time to study the question and produce proposals for the solution of the difficulty. He counted on gaining an advantage through lack of unity amongst the three Powers. But the language used to him by M. de Nelidoff and Baron Calice was not calculated to confirm his assumption, and Said has since been trying to conciliate the Powers by every concession he can think of.

From the foregoing it is clear that the change of Ministers has not meant a change in the political situation for Turkey. The new Grand Vizir is making efforts, no less than Djevad Pacha, to obtain a peaceful solution by negotiation with the Powers. The deciding factor is still the attitude which the Sultan will adopt towards his new Ministers. What has happened so far makes it appear probable that the Sultan may be inclined to accept their advice.

IX. 235

COUNT HENCKEL VON DONNERSMARCK, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *June 17th*, 1895

The Porte yesterday handed to the British, French, and Russian Ambassadors the reply to their proposals regarding the Armenian reforms.[1] This time it is drafted in French, and not Turkish, as was the last statement by the Porte on the subject. It contains contradictions and ambiguities, so that the Ambassadors have applied to the Porte through the chief Dragomans for a less ambiguous reply from the Ministers.

Although this time also the Porte refuses to create the post of High Commissioner for Armenia or to agree that the Powers shall control the appointment of Walis in Armenia, Sir Philip Currie is not dissatisfied with the Ministers' new statement. He infers from certain expressions in the fresh effort at composition a more conciliatory feeling on the Porte's part and a decided readiness to come into line.

[1] Cf. *Staatsarchiv*, Vol. LVIII, No. 10, 937.

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *June 27th*, 1895

Cipher telegram.

The British Ambassador in Constantinople telegraphed yesterday to Lord Kimberley that the Porte has declared to the three Ambassadors, who are engaged on the Armenian question, in answer to the question of the Powers as to which points are still in dispute, and which are agreed upon in principle, that it will at once set up a Commission to confer on these questions.[1]

German Note.

On June 23rd Lord Rosebery's Cabinet resigned and on June 26th Lord Salisbury undertook to form a new Government.

IX. 236

BARON VON SAURMA, AMBASSADOR IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *June 27th*, 1895

Confidential.

My Russian colleague, M. de Nelidoff, informed me confidentially to-day of the ill-considered way in which a short time ago the British Government (while still under Lord Rosebery) had acted in the Armenian question, and then had to effect an embarrassed retreat.

One day in particular Sir Philip Currie had been at his, Nelidoff's, house, directly after the Porte's note rejecting the reform memorandum. Sir Philip appeared greatly excited and showed him Lord Kimberley's instructions, which declared that England could no longer look patiently on at the Porte's dealings and was determined to use force—preferably jointly with the Reform Powers, but, if necessary, alone—to make the Porte see reason. He, Currie, had asked his Russian colleague how he stood in the matter, and to what extent he could rely on his co-operation.

M. de Nelidoff had replied at once that this sudden outburst of anger in London greatly surprised him, and that he was sure that in St. Petersburg they would hesitate before joining England in a direct enterprise against Turkey. He had telegraphed at once to Prince Lobanoff, and had been answered by return that there was no idea of giving the slightest support to any aggressive action on England's part against Turkey.

Immediately on this, and with the additional reason that the French followed the same line as the Russians, the British attitude suddenly calmed down,[2] so much so that afterwards Sir Philip Currie would scarcely admit to M. de Nelidoff that he had so

[1] Cf. *Staatsarchiv*, Vol. LVIII, p. 116.
[2] Cf. S. H. Jeyes, *Lord Rosebery*, p. 216 et seq.

lately, under orders from his Government, expressed himself in such abrupt terms, and that the Russian Ambassador had been compelled to place before him the memorandum, which he had at once drafted during the conversation he had had with him at the time about it.

With the keen perception peculiar to Orientals, the Porte is sure to have observed the change of tone, which exists between England on the one side and Russia and France on the other, with regard to the demands for reform. It is to be feared, therefore, that they may be inclined here to drag out the matter longer than is desirable, considering its importance.

Yesterday the Sultan was certainly contemplating the appointment of Shakir Pacha as Commissioner, as a step towards a scheme of reform in Armenia. I understand from my Russian colleague that this is the very man who suggested the formation of the Hamidie troops, so notorious during the Armenian disturbances, and therefore not the best choice for the removal of abuses, the originators of which are to be sought in these same undisciplined and licentious bands with their military organisation.

CHAPTER XVII

THE SIAMESE DISPUTE, AND ITS REACTIONS ON EUROPEAN POLITICS, JULY–DECEMBER, 1893

German Note.

In the middle of 1893 various circumstances gave rise to a serious conflict between France and Siam, and the French delivered an ultimatum demanding, amongst other concessions, the whole left bank of the Mekong River. This action aroused strong indignation in England, since France had formerly repeatedly declared her readiness to respect Siam's integrity. Lord Rosebery informed the German Ambassador confidentially on July 24th, 1893, that it was 'almost impossible' for England to accept France as a neighbour in Burma. At the same time the British Cabinet shrank from breaking with France, and the British Government sent the Ambassador, Lord Dufferin, who was on leave at the time, back to Paris in order to arrive at an understanding with Develle, the French Foreign Minister. . . .

[The importance of this incident [1] was greatly exaggerated by Germany and use was made of it to attempt to force England to join the Triple Alliance, by depriving her of allies against France, unless the Triple Alliance's conditions were complied with. The early removal of the war-danger brought this attempt to nothing, but it nevertheless aroused in England a realisation of the dangers attending isolation.]

VIII. 103–4

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 26th*, 1893

Cipher telegram. Very secret.

I found Lord Rosebery to-day in a very depressed mood. Having first remarked that he was speaking to me confidentially as a friend, and not as Minister, he complained vehemently of the fresh difficulties of his position. He was convinced that if China would only do her part, a firm attitude on England's part would suffice to induce the French Government to give way even now, as the latter was undoubtedly afraid of a war with England on account of further incalculable consequences. But he did not know—and it seemed to him doubtful—whether he could gain his colleagues' consent to such a policy.

But if here they let everything go on without interference, he

[1] Cf. Sir S. Lee, *King Edward VII*, I, p. 669.

was quite certain that the French pretensions would become boundless and that any understanding on all the other questions pending between the two countries would be impossible. At the same time he admitted readily that unconditional compliance by England in Siam would seriously shake her prestige in India.

As against the above, the Minister (who had apparently forgotten his recent utterance) denied hotly that he wished to hold China in check. It was clear to him that China, without first declaring war officially, could inflict grave injury on France in Tonkin with the Black Flag, etc., and perhaps bring her to terms. He added that he was expecting hourly a telegram from Pekin, stating the Chinese intentions.

German Note.

Extract from a telegram by Count Hatzfeldt (July 24th): 'I received the impression from Lord Rosebery's very confidential utterances that China is now not disinclined to take Siam's part, but that he is recommending her for the present to hold her hand until his negotiations with the French Government are finished.'

Since his first conversation with M. Develle, Lord Dufferin has been unable to see the Minister again. Yesterday, therefore, Lord Rosebery spoke to the French Ambassador, recited the list of promises regarding Siam, which his Government had not kept, and finally he tells me he declared firmly that if France continues on this path, there can never again in future be any question of concessions of any sort by England respecting Egypt.

The Minister returned to the discussion of our views of the events in Siam, and admitted the correctness of the opinion I had recently expressed [to the effect that Germany must keep entirely apart from the matter, because any interference on her part would be regarded in Paris as a provocation]. He praised our Press, and said that its attitude was better than it had been at the start of the Siamese affair. He added finally that our interest in the question would increase in the event of a war between France and England, since there would then be an opportunity to bring the Quadruple Alliance into existence.

When I took leave of him on the eve of my departure for Cowes, I said that if he wished, I could easily come up from there to speak to him. The Minister appeared pleased and said it was a critical moment here, and might easily lead to a ministerial crisis.

VIII. 105.

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 27th*, 1893

Telegram. Extract.

My impression is that Lord Rosebery means to encourage China and draw Italy into the affair, in the hope of thus securing

the participation of Germany and Austria. He expects thus to bring pressure to bear on his colleagues to make up their minds.

MEMORANDUM BY HOLSTEIN OF THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 27th*, 1893

In reference to the above telegram from London concerning England's attempt to draw Italy and Germany into the Anglo-French dispute.

We must first make sure that the somewhat dramatic confidences made by Lord Rosebery to the German and Italian Ambassadors do not aim, as stated in the final sentence of the telegram, at bringing pressure to bear on his colleagues, but at covering and, in fact, making possible England's retreat by the introduction of a third party.

It is a matter of life and death to Italy not to leave England unsupported in a war against France. Nevertheless, there is one of two suppositions :

Either hostilities have already begun, in which case England can no longer withdraw ; or, England has made a firm treaty with Italy, which must bear Gladstone's signature.

If Italy joins diplomatically in the Anglo-French quarrel, before one of these suppositions is fulfilled, it will serve as a lightning conductor for England, that is to say, England will probably slip out of the affair, whilst France will suffer a diplomatic check and be faced, moreover, with the prospect of having to reckon with Italy at the first opportunity. Recent experiences make it highly improbable that a Government led by Gladstone will then of its own accord and unconstrained come to the aid of Italy.

Germany's eventual part is clearly foreshadowed. We are obliged to support Italy in a war against France. According to the Treaty, it is enough that there is a war, no matter what the cause may be. But it is essential that the declaration of war or the first act of war must come from France. It is, therefore, directly to our interests that Italy does not become on worse terms with France without being certain of England's support by act or by treaty.

VIII. 106

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON MARSCHALL, *July 28th*, 1893

Count Lanza called on me to-day, to inform me of the contents of a telegram from Signor Brin. Count Tornielli had found Lord Rosebery, when he last saw him, much 'preoccupied ' on account of the Siamese question and worried by the complications that might arise from it. Signor Brin wished therefore to learn our position in this burning question.

I told the Ambassador of our intention to maintain our former reserve. We had full confidence in Lord Rosebery's attitude towards the Triple Alliance, as also in his energy. We also understood the difficulties of his position with his colleagues, but all this could not induce us to overstep the line we had so far taken up with regard to the Franco-Siamese quarrel. Lord Rosebery had fully and confidentially discussed with Count Hatzfeldt—and also, I gathered, with Count Tornielli—the difficulty of the situation, but had said nothing of a wish for diplomatic intervention of any kind. It was not difficult to foresee the results of this by a member of the Triple Alliance. Indeed, if Italy played the part of an 'honest broker' in Paris, France might be induced to give way, but the whole of France's fury at the diplomatic check would fall on Italy, and France and England would soon be good friends again. The case would be different if it came to a war between France and England; then the moment might certainly come, which clearly necessitated an active policy.

The allusions in the British press to a possible Quadruple Alliance, i.e., England's entrance into the Triple Alliance, was so far satisfactory as showing that public opinion is beginning to realise that he who likes isolation in good times, must be prepared to be isolated in bad times also. But as long as the Quadruple Alliance was merely a British threat for time of need, it will be well not to attach too great importance to it.

VIII. 107

KIDERLEN, IN THE EMPEROR'S SUITE AT COWES, TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE, *July* 31*st*, 1893

Cipher telegram.

Her Majesty the Queen of England has caused her Private Secretary, Sir Henry Ponsonby, to communicate to the Emperor the following telegram from Lord Rosebery: 'French Government demands withdrawal of our gun-boat from before Bangkok. I have refused this. Desire to see Count Hatzfeldt in London immediately.' The Queen has requested His Majesty to send Count Hatzfeldt to London forthwith. The Ambassador is ill in bed, so Count Metternich (First Secretary) is going to London to-morrow to bring back Lord Rosebery's wishes to the Ambassador.

German Note.

. . . The above telegram was bound naturally to give the Emperor the impression that war was immediately imminent and Lord Rosebery was asking for German support. Later when the dispute was settled, Lord Rosebery tried to explain it to Count Hatzfeldt by saying that in telegraphing to the Queen, he had, in consideration of the Emperor's presence, thought it necessary to request that the Emperor should be informed of

it. His Majesty's marginal remark to Hatzfeldt's despatch (November 3rd) was: '*So blau!* That need not have been done through a deathly pale private secretary at 12 o'clock in the night.'

VIII. 108

COUNT HATZFELDT, AT COWES, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July* 31*st*, 1893

Secret.

. . . After consultation with his own doctor, who is looking after me, the Emperor has forbidden me to go to London for the present. It will perhaps be better for me to see Lord Rosebery in two or three days, when I shall know what answer to return to his question about our intended attitude.

I have directed Count Metternich to inform him to-day, if he asks, that before consulting Berlin I can naturally give only my own personal views. As I have repeatedly said and he has admitted, we cannot intervene in the Siamese question. But if it actually comes to a European conflict between England and France, he, Lord Rosebery, has certainly been correct in his idea of securing Italy's co-operation in it. Merely speaking personally, I think that if this becomes imminent, we must consider under what circumstances, if at all, our interests would not suffer, if we allowed or encouraged Italy to be drawn into a war, which might oblige the Triple Alliance, including Germany, to give armed support to its Ally, i.e., to take part in a European War.

Speaking personally as before, I should be ready to forward any proposals of Lord Rosebery's to Berlin and to ask for instructions as regards the reply. His Majesty's presence here would insure no time being lost in obtaining his necessary authority for this instruction.

I myself do not yet believe in a conflict between England and France, but would not however think it right to dishearten Lord Rosebery by any words of mine from now onwards, as he has enough troubles in his own camp to overcome.

I consider that the questions we have to discuss together are as follows:

1. Does it at all suit our political and military policy for a European conflict to break out *now*, from which we could not hold aloof in the long run?

(The CHANCELLOR: '*From the point of view of domestic politics, a war would not be undesirable, if strongly supported by public opinion. From the military point of view it is just as good now as later. Once the cadres allowed by the Military Law are formed—say, by the end of October—our mobilisation gains after the completion of the first large quota of recruits, and so does our war formation, say next spring. With each year the numbers entitled to*

leave increase, but that happens in France and Russia also. Just now the question of arming presents no great problem.)'

If not, we ought to pour cold water on it in time, and it should be easy, considering the difficulties caused to Lord Rosebery by the opposition of some of his colleagues to an energetic policy, to tell him that our consent to Italy's participation would depend on the most complete guarantees being offered here to the Triple Alliance, *as such*, and on Italy's not counting on our support, if she acted without our consent.

2. If a European conflict suits us now, should we reply to Lord Rosebery that we recommend to him a formal understanding with Italy and will even help in it, but intend ourselves to remain in the background? Or,

3. If an Anglo-French conflict starts in earnest, and if the British Government is evidently determined on it and raises the question of our participation, should we counter it by asking whether it is ready in this event to join the Triple Alliance? If England says yes, we can certainly no longer keep aloof and must be prepared and determined to join with all our forces in a general war, which would then break out, and which we have staved off hitherto.

Whichever we choose, I think it absolutely necessary to make up our minds at once now on this question, so as to avoid being taken by surprise.

If conditions here make war with France inevitable, which, although I do not yet believe in it, is always possible owing to the present arrogance of the French, and may even now already be planned in conjunction with Russia, everything may go *very quickly*, and I must be able, as soon as possible, to state our position to Lord Rosebery without hesitation, in order to serve our interests most efficiently at the decisive moment.

Always assuming that a general conflict suits us now both politically and militarily I suggest:

1. that Italy certainly cannot wait until England has suffered a defeat, but must leap to her assistance *at once*; also that she must, without hesitation, declare here her readiness to conclude a suitable agreement with reciprocal guarantees;

(The CHANCELLOR: '*Correct. If England were defeated decisively at sea and were driven out of the Mediterranean, it would be foolish for Italy to declare war on France.*')

2. that if things went so far we should reply to Lord Rosebery's enquiry as to our attitude by the counter-question whether England is willing to enter the Triple Alliance, at the same time making it clear on this condition, which we consider a necessary guarantee for the security of the Triple Alliance, that we should decide that Italy should immediately support England

and should ourselves help to conclude the necessary understanding.

(The CHANCELLOR: '*For us the best beginning for the next great war would be for the first shot to be fired from a British ship. Then we are sure of being able to convert the Triple Alliance into a Quadruple one. We must avoid sending Italy forward alone. The blows would fall on her, and it would be all the worse for us later. Thus, first commit England irretrievably, and then, but not till then, whether Russia comes in later or not, let the Triple Alliance Powers, or Italy plus Germany, take action. That is the correct military sequence, and diplomacy must act in accordance with it.*')

Herr von Kiderlen knows the contents of this telegram. He intends to discuss with me immediately the report that will have to be submitted to His Majesty on this matter.

German Note.

The following telegram refers to the French Ultimatum to Siam, in reply to which Siam admitted the French claim to the left bank of the Mekong, but only as far North as 18° Latitude. At first the French Government declared this reply to be unsatisfactory.

VIII. 110

COUNT VON METTERNICH, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 31st*, 1893

Cipher telegram.

Lord Rosebery received me with the words that the threatening war-clouds had suddenly parted in an unexpected manner. Up to yesterday evening the French Government had not admitted the Siamese submission to the French conditions. The British Naval Commander at Bangkok had reported that the French Commandant had demanded the withdrawal of the British ships from the blockade area. Lord Rosebery had ordered the British Commander not to obey the French demand, and had also instructed Lord Dufferin to communicate this in Paris in serious language.

On the previous evening Lord Dufferin had reported that the French Government had accepted the Siamese submission and was about to raise the blockade. Almost at the same time the British Commander at Bangkok had reported that the French demand for withdrawal was based on a misconception. The French Commandant had never given this order.

Lord Rosebery informed me later as a complete secret that the territorial difficulties on the Upper Mekong, regarding the districts ceded by England to Siam, were as good as removed, and that he had every reason to believe that the French Government's claims to Battambang and Angkor were to be dropped. Lord

Rosebery is keeping these two French concessions secret for the present in order to avoid exposing M. Develle, whom he wishes to support, to the attacks of public opinion in France. It was from public opinion alone that Lord Rosebery fears the renewal of strained relations between England and France, whose Government is too weak to defy public opinion if excited.

Now that matters were becoming more peaceful, my conversation with the Minister did not turn to the general situation, and we merely touched lightly on any consequences there might be, if the Anglo-French points of difference became acute. Count Tornielli has not visited Lord Rosebery since last Wednesday.

Lord Rosebery, who on account of the cleared situation has called off the Cabinet Council, which was summoned for to-day, intends to come to Cowes in the course of the week.

I am commanded by His Majesty to return to Cowes this evening to report on this conversation.

German Note.

Later on Lord Rosebery felt it necessary to explain repeatedly to the German representatives his attitude in the Siamese affair, which was constantly represented as a retreat before the French. He told Count Hatzfeldt (November 18th, 1893) why, after the formal reason for complications with France had been removed, he had avoided allowing the still outstanding delimitations of Siamese territory to be a matter of war or peace. He had at the time made quiet inquiries as to the reception that his continued treatment of the affair as a *casus belli* would meet with in the House, the Press and in public opinion, and had heard from all sides that in such a case he could hope for support in no quarter. Under these circumstances ' he had been forced to pause before taking up an unfriendly attitude towards France and finally to admit to himself that the Siamese question was not yet the one on which to settle accounts with France '.

[There seems no justification for the statement given below, which was categorically contradicted by Admiral Ballard in a letter to *The Times* on January 9th, 1924, shortly after the publication of the German volumes. The statement attributed to Lord Rosebery as to the events on this Sunday appears also to be incorrect, and it seems very improbable that he should have made it in this form. There were in attendance on that day, not only the Resident Clerk, but also other high officials of the Foreign Office who vividly remembered the crisis and their discussions with Lord Rosebery.]

In February, 1900, he again referred to the subject with Count Metternich. According to Metternich's report of February 20th, 1900, Lord Rosebery said he had long wished to explain two events of his term of Office, which were calculated to place him in a false light. I was sure to remember that memorable evening at Cowes, early in the nineties, when he had sent to Osborne serious news at the time of the Anglo-French dispute about Siam, and I was sent, by the Emperor's orders, to him, Lord Rosebery. He was not sure if he had ever related to me the exact course of events. I interrupted him with the remark that he had received me with the exclamation that the clouds had now in the meantime parted and that our conversation, which might otherwise have been highly interesting to him, was then practically over. He then reminded me of the

individual circumstances of that period. It was on a Sunday that he had received from the British Commander at Bangkok a telegram announcing that the French Commandant had demanded the withdrawal of the British war-ship. He had tried in vain to penetrate into the Foreign Office, which stands empty on Sundays and is only kept by an old woman. All his colleagues were in the country. He had sent a messenger to Mr. Gladstone, then still Prime Minister, and telegraphed to the British Commander on his own responsibility to refuse completely the French demand. He had expected that on the Monday the country would wake up to find itself at war with France, without any Minister but himself having the slightest notion of it.

At this critical moment he had telegraphed to the Queen. The next morning, just before I came to him, the British Commander had reported the peaceful settlement of the dispute instead of the expected thunder of big guns. This meant that all prospect of war-like developments with France was at an end. Even now he did not know precisely the course taken by events at Bangkok. I laughed and said that I could tell him. The British Commander had cleared out. Lord Rosebery replied that he did have the impression that the British Commander gave in too easily, but he had never discovered for certain. The affair had been very unpleasant for him on account of the machinery that he had to set in motion, eventually to no purpose, and ' because it might look as if he had been making a fool of his Sovereign '. (English in text.)

VIII. 115

Baron von Marschall to Count Hatzfeldt, *August 4th*, 1893

Secret.

In my last despatch [1] I wrote that England would scarcely enter a war with France without being assured of the support of the Triple Alliance, and, first of all, of Italy, and that this support could not be given or promised until events—war—or an agreement made reciprocity a certainty.

I think I am in sympathy with Your Excellency's views, if I supplement my first instruction, as follows : In speaking to British statesmen the possibility of assistance without a treaty should never be mentioned. A firm agreement should be represented to them as an absolute condition previous to any form of assistance, so as to ensure that we are saved by diplomatic work beforehand from the danger, which would arise if Triple Alliance Powers became liable to help England without a previous treaty, that is, without proper preparation. The Powers would naturally insist, at the moment of mobilisation, on an Agreement, which would make a separate peace impossible. Even this would not remove the risk of England's being decisively defeated, before the Italian fleet had time to attack, and also of Italy's behaving if she were not bound by a firm treaty with England as she did in 1870, when the Italian troops were already in full movement.

From the moment that England has lost a naval battle in the Mediterranean, Italy is faced with the certainty that, if she takes

[1] Not given.

part in the war, she will have to pay for the final victory with the ruin of her coast towns. From then on the general pressure for an understanding with France will make it impossible for the weak parliamentary Government of Italy to maintain its present anti-French policy.

As the successor of the old Roman Empire Italy has aspirations of various kinds, of which some can be only realised by opposition to France, and others by union with her. Once Italy lets go her present programme of expansion in the Mediterranean and acquisitions in North Africa, and takes up Irridentism again, she will be ripe for an understanding with France, and would at the expense of Austria and Turkey make generous concessions about the coasts of the Adriatic, so as herself to acquire Morocco, Egypt, etc.

A Franco-Italian understanding would naturally cause the Austrians to ask whether there was not more to be gained on the Russian anti-British side, than on that of the Triple Alliance, now no longer available.

These are the considerations which suggest themselves when one contemplates a British defeat. I hope therefore that you may succeed in convincing the leading British statesmen of the necessity of insuring themselves against the approaching danger of war by a firm treaty concluded in time. As matters are to-day, the danger of war may suddenly appear, as shown by the course taken in the Siamese affair.

VIII. 116

PRINCE HENRY VII OF REUSS, IN VIENNA, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *August 18th*, 1893

In my report of August 16th I mentioned to Your Excellency the communication made to me by Count Nigra on the subject of the attitude which Lord Rosebery is now apparently assuming towards the former exchange of ideas between Lord Salisbury and the Triple Alliance Powers regarding the Mediterranean question.[1]

In conversation to-day with Count Kalnoky this subject was discussed. The Minister assured me that the British Foreign Secretary made a declaration to Count Deym to the effect that he had not read the documents relating to it, and did not wish to read them. In making this statement the Count did not go so far as my Italian colleague, who had formed a very pessimistic opinion of the matter. He thinks it quite natural for Lord Rosebery, who has no idea how long this Cabinet will remain in power, to refuse to bind himself,—indeed he cannot do so—to a policy, for

[1] Cf. Vol. I, p. 360.

which even his predecessor undertook no binding engagements. For the rest, Count Kalnoky considered that his British colleague would continue his friendly attitude towards the policy of the Triple Alliance, as far as is possible in a Cabinet led by Gladstone.

The Italians had certainly somewhat lost faith in their British friend and feared that he would leave them in the lurch, when the crisis arrived.

Count Kalnoky added that he had never considered the Notes in question as a binding agreement, but merely as a form, expressing more clearly and definitely the existing similarity of views of all four Cabinets.

VIII. 117

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *September 13th*, 1893

Extract. Secret.

The dispute with France on events in Siam, which threatened to break out during the Emperor's stay at Cowes,[1] was settled very quickly, as Your Excellency will remember. I may add that I never expected anything different, because I was convinced that the French Government, which was by no means inclined for a conflict with unforeseen European consequences, and had only extended a feeler, in order to ascertain the limit of Mr. Gladstone's well-known patience, would not hesitate, at the first sign of firmness on the part of the British Government, to return to the path of understanding. . . .

I will add in conclusion that the Siamese affair has left behind it a permanent advantage in this respect—a compete swing round of public opinion here, which a few years ago could hardly have been hoped for ; the public is deeply irritated by the French want of consideration, wherever British and French interests meet, and has become familiar with the idea, which used to frighten it, of a rapprochement with the Triple Alliance and especially with Germany. I should be guilty of neglect, if I failed to add my full conviction that this very important swing round is very largely to be ascribed to the repeated visits and the personal influence of His Majesty the Emperor. The British public has become more and more convinced that he has judged England honestly and is equally honestly determined to use all his efforts to keep that peace which every Englishman desires.

German Note.

The German Representative in Bangkok reported on September 18th certain utterances by the French Plenipotentiary, Lemyre de Vilers, to the effect that there was on the French side an idea of forestalling the fear of German support for England in the event of a struggle by a nearer under-

[1] See p. 239.

standing between France and Germany. 'Our first aim is now England's humiliation. If we were masters in Siam, Germany would profit from it, as she does in Cochin China, where the British mean nothing and the Germans a great deal. We could promise you advantages in Colonial matters. It is a pity that this fine opportunity has been let go by, but perhaps there is still time.'

VIII. 119

Count Hatzfeldt, in London, to the Chancellor, Count von Caprivi, *September* 19, 1893

During my confidential conversation yesterday with the Under-Secretary of State I was able to mention the intended visit of the British Mediterranean squadron to some of the Italian ports, which was freely reported in the English and Continental Press.

German Note.

The allusion is to Admiral Seymour's visit to Taranto (October 16th–20th), which was the occasion of great festivities and speeches on the Anglo-Italian friendship.

I said: 'I know nothing of it, for Lord Rosebery has since his return not mentioned this matter to me, though we often discussed it before in detail. Perhaps greater reserve on the subject is imposed on him, of which I naturally know nothing, and I have therefore thought it better to say nothing about it either. Nor do I wish to appear indiscreet towards you, and there is no need for you to reply to me, if you prefer it for any reason.'

Sir Philip Currie, who is usually willing to discuss political matters fully, was quite silent for a moment and then said that there was nothing new about the intended visit of the British Squadron to the Italian ports, but that it was part of an earlier scheme and was to be carried out at the desire of the Italian Government. He said nothing of the impending appearance of Russian war-ships at Toulon, or of their being permanently stationed in the Mediterranean and the pretended establishment of a coaling station on the French coast, questions which are to-day being discussed with deep interest in the whole European Press and may have deep significance for England.

My impression was that the information given me was part of the scheme prepared in the Foreign Office for replying to any such questions put by foreign Representatives. I was, if anything, more struck by the fact that, although the Under-Secretary was formerly most careful to explain to me Lord Rosebery's pro-Triple Alliance policy, as opposed to that of a certain section of his colleagues, he did not try to say a word in denial of my half-joking suggestion that Lord Rosebery was obliged to maintain greater reserve.

If these impressions of mine are well founded, as my observa-

tion forces me to suppose, and as an earlier report indicated to Your Excellency, I must at the same time suggest that the temporary reserve being shown here, is largely due to articles in the Continental Press and, as far as the German papers are concerned, to the foolish and premature discussion whether England will soon enter the Triple Alliance. I have no doubt that those members of the British Cabinet, to whom such a turn of affairs might perhaps be welcome, have been frightened at the impression that the newspaper articles may make on public opinion here, which is always averse to formal agreements, and that this circumstance has been cleverly made use of by that section of the Cabinet which is opposed to a rapprochement with the Triple Alliance, for the purpose of convincing the rest of their colleagues, including perhaps even Lord Rosebery, that a halt on the journey which has been begun is temporarily necessary.

As far as I can judge from here, the newspapers, which are supposed to be influenced and led by Prince Bismarck, have probably done most of the harm. I enclose a cutting of a leading article from the *Globe* of September 18th, in which this paper denies the reproach brought by the *Hambürger Nachrichten*, that England is pursuing a selfish policy. It asserts England's absolute right to examine coolly the conditions under which union with the Triple Alliance may be of advantage to her interests, and supposing she determined thereby to undertake the defence of our interests, to claim the same (i.e. the defence of their interests) from us.

Also the enclosed cutting of an article by *The Times* Berlin Correspondent (September 18th) discusses the attitude of the German Press with regard to England's sometime entrance into the Triple Alliance.

The harm done by these Press discussions is all the more deplorable, since, as I said before, public opinion here has lately, as a result of the aggressive policy of France, grown more and more to favour the idea of seeking a counterweight to the French menace in a rapprochement with a friendly Germany and her Allies.

As things are here at present, in consequence of the increased reserve of the British Government, I am more than ever convinced that it is desirable for us in every direction to oppose it with a like reserve, and to wait until the course of events again obliges the British Government to seek our support. This may happen sooner than is now imagined, and if it does not happen, I still consider that it would certainly be useless to try to hasten such a turn of events by bringing pressure from our side.

Once again emphatically, I do not think that I am incorrect in supposing that if, complying with the pressure of his colleagues and their anxiety about public opinion, Lord Rosebery is for the

time being showing greater reserve, he in no way intends to renounce the final object of his policy, but that he is only waiting for a favourable opportunity for gathering up the threads of it again.

VIII. 127

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *December 29th*, 1893

Cipher telegram. Secret.

Yesterday Lord Rosebery listened with interest to the Austrian Ambassador's proposals in favour of reassuring Italy, and replied that it was not in his power to induce the Cabinet to come to an agreement with Italy at this moment, and he could not give any personal assurance to that effect behind the backs of his colleagues. But he was convinced that the Italian Government need even now have no doubts of being able to count on help from here against an attack.

The Minister added that he realised the possible danger of an understanding between Italy and France, but thought it neither pressing nor likely in the near future. With the present Chamber in existence the French Government could not offer a really favourable Commercial treaty at the moment. The French Chauvinists would hardly allow a *territorial* understanding in the Mediterranean to Italy's advantage. But if the French Government were willing to help in floating an Italian loan, we should then see that, if such a loan was found capable of being negotiated in Paris, it could be taken up just as easily in London. The Minister said that a further important increase of the British fleet, which, he could assure me, was to be expected very soon,[1] would also contribute to reassure Italy and deter her from arriving at an understanding with France.

VII. 138

BERNARD VON BÜLOW, AMBASSADOR IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *February 20th*, 1894

Extract. Very confidential.

Signor Ressmann[2] hopes that England will support Italy in the event of a conflict with France. But in such a conflict Italy may not be the formal aggressor. Lord Dufferin told him lately that the British statesmen were nearly all agreed that England, and not Italy, must take the risks against France. But no British statesman could act against public opinion. The latter would—but then it certainly would—only take Italy's part, if Italy appeared as the party attacked, and not as the aggressor.

[1] Cf. p. 252. [2] Italian Ambassador in Paris.

CHAPTER XVIII

AUSTRIAN ANXIETIES REGARDING BRITISH INTENTIONS IN THE NEAR EAST, NOVEMBER, 1893–MARCH, 1894

IX. 101

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *November 6th*, 1893

Very confidential.

A curious ray of light is thrown upon the present state of feeling in British circles by the circumstance that the Queen of England's second son, the present Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, whilst lately on a visit at the Court here, distinctly declared to the Emperor that England would not object to a Russian occupation of Constantinople. Earlier statements by Lord Randolph Churchill prove that the Duke is not the only one in England to think this. But for a British politician to look with indifference upon a Russian Constantinople and the appearance of a strong Russian fleet with an assured basis of operations in the Mediterranean, must by simple logic be going as far as Lord Charles Beresford, who considered that England should renounce her supremacy in the Mediterranean and Egypt also, and defend India by the route round the Cape. (The EMPEROR: *'That was also the Duke's view!'*)

We are, as you know, convinced that we could stand a Russian occupation of the Straits without a qualm (The EMPEROR: *'I said this to Kalnoky at Güns'*) and we also believe that it is not to Austria's interest to resist by force a Russian occupation of Constantinople by herself. In any case we could not help Austria in any such attempt. (The EMPEROR: *'Correct.'*)

But even though we have no *direct* interests in the Mediterranean, it is bound to have a far-reaching effect on our general policy, who is master of the Mediterranean, England or—until the resulting conflict of interests is decided—a Franco-Russian coalition. I beg you, therefore, to observe all symptoms and report those that tend to show that there is a growing opinion in England that the control of the Mediterranean is not a vital

British interest. If this idea gains ground in England under a Liberal Cabinet, we might perhaps regret it, but we cannot prevent it. (The EMPEROR: '*Correct.*') So that our main care must be to obtain as soon as possible information, based on authentic observation, of the aims of Liberal policy in this direction.

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *November 28th*, 1893

Prince Reuss informs us by word of mouth that the British Cabinet's recent attitude has not failed in its impression on Austria's Eastern policy. The Austrian Ambassador in St. Petersburg expresses this idea, and Count Kalnoky also is accustoming himself to the thought, that Austria must look upon a Russian occupation of Constantinople, unopposed by a third party, as a certain factor in the future.

IX. 102–3

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *December 6th*, 1893

Secret.

My visit of yesterday to the Foreign Office convinced me that the Minister is fairly well informed of the suspicion which the latest phase of British policy has given rise to at various Courts. Although he will not admit that this suspicion is justified, he earnestly desires to see the former confidence restored.

German Note.

Count Hatzfeldt is thinking above all of England's treatment of the Siamese question, in which England at first acted with great sharpness against France, but very soon played on a softer string.[1]

[The importance of this incident was greatly exaggerated by Germany. Cf. *King Edward VII*, by Sir S. Lee, Vol. I, p. 707.]

When our conversation turned to this question, he took trouble to show that England's recent attitude by no means led to the conclusion that any change of views or aims had come to pass here, or that the latter were to be pursued with less consistency or firmness. Politically England stood just where she was before the Siamese question, and followed the same objects, and he could not understand why other Powers which formerly had recognised England's foreign policy to be satisfactory and in agreement with their own, now found fault with it in all directions. The Minister mentioned the latest negotiations in Paris on the buffer State and remarked with a certain satisfaction that the surprisingly successful result could not have been attained without

[1] Cf. Chapter XVII.

considerable firmness on his own part. The French had been obliged to make important concessions, which would hardly gain any great applause, when their full import was known in Paris.

I replied to the Minister that in my personal view the feeling which surprised him, and called forth his complaints at other Courts, was not entirely to be explained by the latest phase of British policy; but this has contributed to it, even though he would not admit its reasonableness. Whilst he, Lord Rosebery, insisted that England, as regarded her foreign policy, stood where she did before the Siamese question, he should not forget that in the rest of Europe matters had not stood still. Thus it was very clear and simple that other Powers, who looked on England as a possible ally, even though she had never entered into any full engagement with them, were bound to attach to-day more significance to the symptoms of greater weakness and hesitation in British policy. Speaking personally I considered that many Courts were becoming convinced that the whole policy of Europe would soon be approaching a turning-point, which, if England clung to her present inactivity and indifference, was bound to lead to a different development of affairs in Europe, and would demand of them to take their measures in good time. (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*') I imagined that he, Lord Rosebery, was far better informed than I could be, as to the feeling in Rome, Vienna and elsewhere. It could not be unknown to him that certain leading political personalities in Italy had become familiar with the idea that whatever assistance eventually came from the other Members of the Triple Alliance, there could be no solid support for Italy against a French attack by sea, if she could not count on full and timely action by the British Fleet. (The EMPEROR: '*Correct.*') Once this idea took hold in Italy, I considered that we must look forward to the time, when the country would be tired of pursuing a policy which could guarantee her no support against the dangers that lay nearest. I could not judge the consequences that might result for the general European situation, if Italy ended by falling away from her present Alliances. But I could well foresee that, in this event, Italy would not be able any more to pursue that former policy, which chimed in with British interests in the Mediterranean. But in Vienna also, if my observations had not misled me, there was a feeling of uncertainty regarding England's future co-operation even in the questions in which up to the present the agreement between Austrian and British interests had been accepted as a matter of course. The declamations of British politicians that neither the retention of Egypt nor Constantinople were of supreme importance to England, could hardly have passed unnoticed in Vienna. Under these circumstances, it would hardly be surprising if

Austrian statesmen gradually became convinced that, in the event of a Russian advance against Constantinople, Austria by herself would not be able to withstand it. She would undoubtedly find herself in this position, if England refused to recognise and defend her own interests in the matter, for it was clear that no other European Power would feel called upon to risk its existence for the sake of interests on the Bosphorus, which are peculiar to England and Austria.

The Minister did not deny the correctness of this view in general, but he vehemently questioned the supposition that there was misconception here of the British interests on the Bosphorus or in the Mediterranean, or that there was any change in England's intention to defend them, when necessary. The oratory of a few politicians here, who denied this, was quite without importance, and without influence on public opinion in the country. The best proof of this was that even Mr. Labouchere and Sir Charles Dilke, who, directly after his, Rosebery's, appointment, formed an alliance to attack and strike at him on these grounds, had since then been obliged to give it up. Even in the Cabinet it was impossible for such a policy of abnegation to find acceptance. The Minister continued: 'I dislike speaking of myself, and only do it now, because the representative of British policy in those questions is now myself. There are, as you know, just now only two men in England, who have directed our foreign policy, and that not without success, and who can therefore speak with authority. These are Lord Salisbury and myself. Who would under these circumstances be able to contradict us, supposing I retired, and Lord Salisbury and I united in declaring that the foreign policy pursued by us both was the only right one for England?' (The EMPEROR: '*The best thing that could happen.*')

Later in our conversation Lord Rosebery did not deny that the suspicions against British policy, which he was encountering from various quarters, though quite unjustified in his opinion, must be removed, and that the best way of doing so would be to increase the fleet. This would leave no room for doubt as to England's intention to sustain her part in European policy. (The EMPEROR: '*Yes.*') Having first requested me not to mention it yet officially, he assured me that there was no doubt that the fleet was to be increased, and that the increase would be a substantial one.

Sir Philip Currie, the Under-Secretary, to whom I mentioned the subject later, confirmed these suggestions and remarked that he greatly desired that the Bill for it should be introduced in Parliament before Christmas. I have no doubt that he will use all his influence with Lord Rosebery in this sense.

IX. 112

PRINCE HENRY VII OF REUSS, IN VIENNA, TO THE CHANCELLOR, CAPRIVI, *December 22nd*, 1893

Extract.

Count Kalnoky said to me:

Up to now it has been received as gospel that England would oppose the Straits being opened for Russia. Even Harcourt is reported to have spoken in this sense in Parliament. That is all to the good; nevertheless, it is not yet certain whether England will really find the courage for so energetic a policy.

For Austria this is the kernel of her Eastern policy.

Up to now the Austrians have tried to assert the position assigned to them by the Treaty of Berlin, and to this end have counted first of all on England's support. This went quite well as long as Sir W. White represented England on the Bosphorus. Under his successor,[1] whose one object has been to make himself pleasant to the Sultan, the task of maintaining the old tradition has rested on the shoulders of the Austrian Ambassador alone, for no assistance could be expected from the weak Italians, and the German Empire's policy is naturally to hold aloof from all intervention in Eastern politics. . . .

IX. 117

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO HOLSTEIN, GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *December 30th*, 1893

Private letter.

I have used the material sent to me in confidential conversation with Sir Philip Currie,[2] to whom I had to speak on another subject, and it clearly made a great impression on him. Having given up his business at the Foreign Office, he is now staying with Lord Rosebery for a few days in the country and hopes to influence him in favour of an active and energetic policy, especially in the East.

He is certainly going to Constantinople with the intention, as far as his instructions allow him, of restoring England's influence and in all cases acting in harmony with the representatives of the Triple Alliance.

He advanced two objections to my view of the situation, for which I was prepared beforehand:—

1. It had always been obvious that England *could not* allow a Russian advance against the Dardanelles, and he could not understand why there was any question to-day as to England's intention to act in accordance with it, if the need arose. (It was easy to

[1] Sir Clare Ford. [2] The report on this conversation not given.

refute this objection by pointing to the present Cabinet's flabby policy, through which the confidence of the other Powers had been lost.)

2. He considered that in the present situation the Powers opposing the Russo-French group should make common cause diplomatically in Constantinople and act together in all cases. A Russian break-through into the Mediterranean, if genuinely supported by the French, would not only endanger British interests, but also probably lead to a European war. How then could diplomatic action in Constantinople, based on a common understanding, such as he, Sir Philip Currie, would like to see, come to pass, if Germany now declares her intention to have no more to do with anything there, and if the fear persisted that we were now encouraging Austria to seek an understanding with Russia ?

I replied that he might remember the influence wielded by the Triple Alliance with England in Constantinople in the time of Sir William White. For the fact that this community of action had failed more and more since that time British policy had only itself to thank. But I always said to Lord Salisbury at the time —and he admitted its correctness—that we ought never to occupy the foreground in Oriental questions which had no direct interest for us, although with this reservation we might interest ourselves in the diplomatic successes of our friends. In Eastern matters it had always been a principle of our policy in general to agree to everything that was acceptable to Austria, and this simply because we had no direct interest to serve. This is exactly how matters stand now. Austria is entirely free to consult her own interests alone in this question and to act accordingly. But no one would blame Austria, if she became finally convinced that Italy was uncertain, that the hope of energetic action on England's part must be definitely given up, and that she was not strong enough by herself to withstand a Russian advance on the Dardanelles with the connivance of France ; and if she paid more attention to hints from St. Petersburg as to the possibility of a mutual understanding in the East. The danger of complete isolation in the East brought this notion so near to Austria, that it could not be wondered at, if mention was eventually made of it, and feelers were put out to discover which supposition was likely to prove the right one. I did not wish to imply that negotiations had already taken place or a plan been fixed upon in Vienna. On the contrary, I thought I could assume that Count Kalnoky wished to wait and see whether his, Currie's, appointment meant a resumption of an energetic Eastern policy, from which it might be concluded that England now intends to defend her interests actively in the Mediterranean and the East. This, in my personal opinion, was the chief meaning of Count

Dehm's recent démarches. Whilst on one side Count Kalnoky followed the policy of insisting here on the importance of giving more encouragement to Italy and of stronger action in Constantinople, he had on the other hand been able to say that the reception accorded here to his warnings justified his drawing a conclusion as to the further intentions of the British Cabinet. I had no need to tell him that this reception, at least as concerns Italy, had not been such that Count Kalnoky could consider it as an especial inducement to let Austria be forced into the danger of complete isolation against all-powerful enemies.

As regards the prospect of an understanding between Austria and Russia ever actually coming to pass, I said that the greatest former obstacle to that, Bulgaria, seemed now to have been removed, as Russia no longer included this country in her calculations. (I will confess to you that I do not believe this myself and think it weak as an argument. In my opinion, the fact is that the Russian Government is saying to itself, and rightly, that once Russia is mistress of the Dardanelles and hence, of Turkey, Bulgaria will sooner or later fall into her lap like a ripe fruit.)

Philip Currie, who followed my argument with serious attention, did not dispute by a word most of my suggestions, but he seized upon one, and indeed essential, point in the whole argument, which he would not admit to be well founded. He thought that there was but little ground for my assumption that Russia could count on sympathy or indeed active support from France for an advance against the Straits and the resulting break-through into the Mediterranean. What would France's interest be in favouring a result, which would make Russia all-powerful against France in the East, allow her to assume the guardianship of the Christians, including the Catholics, of whom France considered herself the protector, and finally force France to share with Russia the control of the Mediterranean,—the real aim of French policy? He, Currie, could not see what price Russia could pay, high enough to induce France to make such sacrifices in the East and the Mediterranean. Even Russian help towards the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine would hardly be regarded in France as a sufficient indemnity for the vast sacrifice in the East that is suggested for her.

I replied that I personally could not share his view. However unwillingly France might make the concessions in the East which he described, she could not afford to risk losing the only friend among the Great Powers, which she thought she had gained, by refusing to forward that Power's wishes in the East. For Russia was rescuing her from isolation, and France hoped with her aid to regain the lost Provinces and to be able to dictate laws to Europe. Moreover he, Currie, was overlooking the fact that

Russia could just now offer a very respectable price in the East —Syria, Egypt and perhaps even Tripolis, i.e., the control of the whole Northern coast of Africa, with the exception of Morocco, and with it the Mediterranean, in which the still relatively insignificant Russian fleet could then never compete with French influence. The value of this already high price would be considerably increased for France, since Italy, who was now in France's way and was an addition to the weight of her rivals, would, from the moment the control of the Mediterranean fell into French hands, cease to be a factor which might in future be dangerous, or merely inconvenient to France.

Whether the political friendship between France and Russia would last very long, *after* the latter had gained her objects in the East, was another question, and was of no great importance in judging the present situation. Once Russia controlled Constantinople and had secured an entry into the Mediterranean, whilst the North Coast of Africa and the Mediterranean itself fell to France, there would be little comfort in prospect for the other Powers with interests in those parts, in the fact that, according to human judgment, a divergence was bound in time to arise between France and Russia.

Currie was unable to find anything much to say against these suggestions either. He merely lamented, naturally in strict confidence, that these attempts to injure British prestige and interests always came when Gladstone was in power, from whom no great resistance could be expected. He then said that Lord Rosebery had again recently met with opposition from his colleagues. I was quite right not to bring pressure for the present. He, Currie, would make every effort to persuade him whilst in the country, and hoped that I should not object to his using my words for the purpose. I answered that he could do this if it would help him, but that if I was compromised by any indiscretion, I should never again make so confidential a communication here, coming from myself alone. He then referred to the necessity for all concerned ' de se concerter ' and expressed his earnest wish for the co-operation of Radolin also.[1] I have, as you know, constantly said to him that Radolin would be delighted to be *personally* pleasant to him and do him any favour, but he could hardly do more than this, as in political matters we held entirely aloof in Constantinople. I said that I would write to Radolin.

This brings me back to the first part of this account, in which I repeated Currie's two really essential remarks, I think correctly. I ought to say a few words about them.

I consider that good has been done here by my insistence regarding our absolute reserve in the East, and by my giving

[1] German Ambassador in Constantinople since 1892.

to understand that we cannot consent to combine in any way with Austria alone in resisting a Russian advance in the East. It is another question whether England will continue for any length of time to make the desired efforts in Constantinople, which Currie personally would like to see, supposing he finds, when he arrives there, that whilst he for his part holds to the representatives of the Triple Alliance, Radolin alone offers him neither advice nor the slightest political help, that is to say, very much less than we offered to Salisbury's representative, White. I refer to the Bulgarian Bishops and similar matters. It is known that at that time I had to represent the view that we could not stand in the foreground but should eventually back up our friends.

German Note. IX. 44.

In July, 1890, at the request of the Bulgarian Government, the Sultan nominated three Bulgarian Bishops for Macedonia, in spite of the protests of the Patriarch.

[The Sultan was eventually induced to give way to Bulgaria on this point.]

I do not pretend to judge whether it is correct for us to cling to our present reserve in Constantinople, because I have not the necessary means for seeing the whole situation. But I think I may point out the special difficulty that may arise from it, as regards British action in Constantinople, if Currie becomes convinced, when he gets there, that nothing is to be hoped for from us, even if he does all that we could wish. This is certainly to be expected.

I need not point out that in answering Currie's complaint, which I had anticipated, I beat about the bush, without raising any expectation, but also without discouraging him unnecessarily.

Currie's meeting with Kalnoky will be very important, and another than Reuss, if he were intimately acquainted with Currie, might find means so to prepare Kalnoky for this conversation, that it might lead to the desired understanding between them. It would seem above all things essential to warn Calice not to reject Currie's advances, but to hold Currie to it if he shows a desire for an understanding and joint action.

Instead of this I regret to see in the final sentence of one of Reuss's latest reports, that he is faithful to the old Bismarckian policy of a separate understanding of Austria with Russia and considers it especially desirable. He probably says so to Kalnoky —I am all the more fain to keep silence, for words would fail me, if my opinion were asked for.

If Italy falls away *and England* throws up her part, *we* naturally shall be quite right, as I often said to Salisbury, *de retirer notre épingle du jeu.* But I cannot describe the political situation, which would then follow in Europe, as a desirable one. In my

opinion—and the Emperor Francis Joseph appears to agree with me—Austria would merely be buying a respite for her existence as a Great Power, and this, apart from all others, seems to me an essential condition for the greatness and welfare of the German Empire.

Salisbury is at Beaulieu. If he were here, I should avoid him, for Rosebery, if I know him, would never forgive me, and I should only be injuring Salisbury.

Would you think it too remarkable or otherwise undesirable, if Currie passed through Berlin? I do not, of course, know how it would be viewed here, as I have never mentioned the point.

[*Note.*—Sir Philip Currie did not after all pass through Berlin. He travelled on January 31st, 1894, stopping only in Vienna.]

Finally a small detail for your entertainment. After I left Currie, I had not yet put on my overcoat in the waiting-room, when he came out and rushed up the stairs in flying haste to see Rosebery.

IX. 126

PRINCE VON RATIBOR, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES IN VIENNA, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *February 13th*, 1894

Count Kalnoky told me to-day that he had had a long conversation with Sir Philip Currie, the newly appointed Ambassador in Constantinople. . . .

The Minister said that in this conversation he had spoken in the same sense as in his instructions to Count Deym. He informed the new British Representative on the Golden Horn that for the moment no question was acute. He considered however that the time was come for England to decide on her attitude with regard to the various future eventualities. Austria-Hungary intended to shape her policy as she considered conducive to her own advantage, and her attitude in this depended on England's.

To judge from his words to-day, Count Kalnoky must have spoken strongly to Sir Philip. The Minister says that the British Ambassador declared his conviction that England must take up a determined attitude in Constantinople, that she must support Italy if necessary, and that an increase of the Fleet was necessary as a preliminary condition.

I dare not give an opinion based on these, so to speak, cursory words of Count Kalnoky's, as to whether he is disposed to settle his account in the East by energetic support of England, or by an agreement with Russia. But from all that we know that the Minister has said and written on the subject, it seems to me that the first eventuality would be more to his taste, in spite of his Russophil excursions at the last Delegations and his hopes that

St. Petersburg will gradually come round to the view that it is absolutely essential for Russia to aim at a rapprochement of the monarchical States, i.e. first of all, Russia and Austria-Hungary. My view is supported by the fact that Count Kalnoky gave Count Deym the instructions that we know of (which may be only a mask), and that he mentioned with satisfaction in his conversation to-day that Sir Philip Currie belonged to the school of Lord Salisbury. Also we may well imagine that the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister is saying to himself that, whatever happens, it will be cheaper for the Monarchy to get the Eastern chestnuts pulled out of the fire by England, than to rely on Russia, who might make disagreeable demands. It must be assumed that Austria-Hungary would be disposed to let the present European constellations go by the board altogether. But I think that there is neither the slightest intention, nor the power of bringing this about.

IX. 127–8

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *February 14th*, 1894

Cipher telegram. Very secret.

Lord Rosebery began of himself to-day to discuss the political situation, particularly with regard to the East. He informed me in the strictest confidence of his latest negotiations with Count Kalnoky. He had told the latter openly both through Count Deym, and latterly through Sir Philip Currie in Vienna, that he, Lord Rosebery, certainly meant to resist any Russian action aimed at a free passage through the Dardanelles, and he thought that with the British fleet he would be successful. (CAPRIVI: *'It would certainly be easier to beat the Russian fleet than the French Toulon one.'*) But if in this event the French fleet acted in support of Russia in the Mediterranean, England alone would not be strong enough to resist, and would be forced in the end to withdraw from the Mediterranean. This being so, the question would be whether Austria, together with the Powers friendly to her, would undertake the task of covering England against France (CAPRIVI: *'Neither Austria nor Austria plus Italy have the requisite naval power for this. England would hardly dare station her Mediterranean squadron at the Dardanelles, with a French fleet behind her, intact or victorious'*), and so prevent the latter from intervening in Russia's favour in the Mediterranean. England could then manage Russia alone.

Count Kalnoky had not yet replied to this overture. Lord Rosebery added in strict confidence that he could not avoid the impression that the Austrian Foreign Minister would now prefer an understanding with Russia. (CAPRIVI: *'He will also be wise*

to do this so long as Lord Rosebery holds this view and can act upon it.')

[*Note.*—Five days later Hatzfeldt reported that Lord Rosebery withdrew this expression of opinion.]

Count Kalnoky seemed to assume that Russia would not much longer postpone the attempt to obtain from the Porte the right of passage through the Dardanelles. He, Lord Rosebery, thought this all the more correct, since a telegram, coming to him to-day from a sure source, stated specifically that Russia is now already pursuing her preparations in the Black Sea with special urgency.

In this connection the Minister sought to show that, as soon as a practical question came forward, demanding and inciting a decision by the British Cabinet, he was sure that his colleagues would support the attitude he himself proposed in the East. (CAPRIVI: '*Practical questions can be put so very suddenly as to leave no time for consulting one's colleagues.*') They would, however, be wrong in Vienna in trying to force him to present to the Cabinet a question, which so far is merely theoretic, for he would then have to face the objection that there was no practical reason for a decision by the Government.

Lord Rosebery spoke in the same sense to Count Deym, who came to see me to-day with instructions from Count Kalnoky to show me his memorandum of January 18th, of which Your Excellency knows, on his conversation with the British Ambassador.[1] Especially noteworthy amongst the very confidential statements made to me by Count Deym, who also recounted to me his conferences with the British Minister up to the present, was one to the effect that in his opinion, the latter was going much further in his Eastern policy, than could have been hoped for in Vienna two months ago, and that he does not think it at all impossible to find an acceptable basis for a future agreement between Austria and England in the East. First, however, the Ambassador must wait for the Courier, who has been announced to him from Vienna, and he is postponing until then any further discussion of the question with Lord Rosebery.

IX. 129

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *February 27th*, 1894

Cipher telegram. Secret.

The Austrian Ambassador informed me in strictest confidence that in conversation with Lord Rosebery yesterday he asked him what form he imagined the desired assistance of Austria and

[1] Not given.

her Allies against intervention by France in favour of Russia would take. To his astonishment the Minister replied firmly that he was determined to oppose Russia and carry on the struggle *alone* in the Mediterranean with the British fleet, if Russia's demand of a free passage through the Straits made it necessary. He earnestly wished to avoid a European war resulting from it, which could hardly be avoided, if any other Powers, Italy even, intervened under arms. In this event, therefore, he, Lord Rosebery, did not ask of Austria and her friends military preparation or military help, either by land or sea, but only an engagement to bring pressure in Paris, so as to hold France in check, if she showed an inclination to take action in the Mediterranean in Russia's favour. He believed all the more that such pressure would suffice, as there was already a prospect of a cooling off of the Franco-Russian friendship owing to the Russo-German commercial treaty.[1]

The Austrian Ambassador is very much pleased with these declarations. He said that Lord Rosebery spoke confidently yesterday and gave him further information regarding the very considerable naval forces which England could bring to bear against Russia in the Mediterranean.

IX. 130

COUNT DEYM, AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN AMBASSADOR IN LONDON, TO COUNT KALNOKY, IN VIENNA, *February 27th*, 1894

Unsigned copy handed by the Austrian Ambassador in Berlin to Szögyény on March 28th, 1894.

Extract. Secret.

I thought it important to obtain a declaration from Lord Rosebery as to the form which he imagines the assistance from the Triple Alliance is to take, if France supports Russia, and I asked him direct what he meant, when he said that the Triple Alliance must hold France in check.

His answer was that England's Mediterranean fleet was strong enough to take up the struggle alone with Russia over the Straits, if necessary, without requiring the help of Austria-Hungary and Italy. 'Yes,' he said, 'I do not desire the Triple Alliance's co-operation for defending the Straits against Russia, for I wish above all to prevent this question from causing a general European war. But in order to take up this conflict alone with Russia with success, I should have to depend on France being held in check by the Triple Alliance, and I do not doubt that, if at the right moment the Triple Alliance declared to France that she must remain neutral, France would not intervene. That is the

[1] H. W. Wilson, *The War Guilt*, pp. 45–6.

way, as I understand it, in which the Triple Alliance must hold France in check.'

I then asked Lord Rosebery, if he really meant that he could also do without help from the Italian fleet. As for our own fleet, he certainly could never have counted on it, as we have no large war-ships, our fleet being meant for coast defence only.

The Secretary of State replied that he had full knowledge of this and he had never thought of combined action. He was also not trying to get help from the Italian fleet, for owing to financial and other difficulties, Italy could not take part in a war without great injury to herself. Moreover, it would make it easier to localise the war, if Italy took no part in it. Should England suffer defeat, which he confidently declared to be out of the question, he believed that Italy could be counted on to come to England's assistance.

Lord Rosebery also discussed the future attitude of the other Powers with interests in the Mediterranean, and said he had made it his business to secure very good relations with the Cabinets of Madrid and Lisbon. He had been so far successful as to be sure of their friendly neutrality to England, if the need for it were to arise.

On the other hand, he is of opinion that Greece would join Russia, and has allowed for this being the case. The Minister's view is that the addition of the Greek ships would not strengthen the Russian fleet materially, and England could well engage them both without help from another fleet.

IX. 131

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *February 28th*, 1894

Secret.

There have lately been considerable negotiations backwards and forwards between Vienna and London regarding a common attitude on the Straits question. Lord Rosebery's declarations (now known to Your Excellency) in his conversation of yesterday with Count Deym have now given them a more settled shape.

My Austrian colleague, who from the beginning has kept me informed of all with laudable frankness, was yesterday clearly under the impression that the Minister's latest statements must be considered very satisfactory, and that his astonishing willingness to do without all material help from Austria and her Allies, formed an acceptable basis for further negotiations.

He said also that he had at first not found it easy to imagine reasonable grounds for this ready renunciation. But finally he believed he had found it in the wish that was felt by every Englishman to prevent unavoidable disturbance of British trade,

during a European war waged abroad, and by localising the war between England and Russia in the Mediterranean, to keep the markets of Europe open for it.

In this conversation I observed for my part the reservation, which Count Deym also recognised, that I could neither discuss officially nor give an official opinion on the negotiations in question; I thought, however, that I might let fall the personal remark that I could conceive another reason for Lord Rosebery's statement that he wished to claim no material help from the friendly Powers. Whilst England maintains her standpoint of taking up the struggle alone against Russia, and—in this case only—asking that her rear should be protected in Paris, she is more or less securing for herself freedom to decide on the moment which best suits herself, and in fact on the opportuneness of fighting Russia at all. In other words if an understanding on this basis were to be contemplated, England would be able to count on the desired protection of her rear in Paris, yet she would not be assuming any binding engagement to undertake to make a *casus belli* out of the Straits question in certain definite eventualities, or to protect the common welfare of the Powers interested in the Mediterranean. Quite apart from the question, which I had no need to mention in London, whether an oral statement by Lord Rosebery was to be regarded as a sufficient engagement, it should also not be overlooked that such an understanding, however secret it might be kept, might come to the ears of a third party, who might read a hostile intention into the engagements undertaken by Austria and her friends, whereas England would not have renounced unconditionally her freedom of decision in the East.

Count Deym would not admit this objection. He said that for a number of years absolute discretion had been observed here with regard to a former secret Agreement with Austria, and the same could quite justifiably be expected now. Also, by reason of his conversations with Lord Rosebery and the Minister's whole attitude, he would not admit that if the basis proposed by him could be accepted, Lord Rosebery would wish to withdraw from a definite engagement to take action in given eventualities. Count Deym was less confident that the Minister would consent to make a written declaration, which he had always so far refused; but he did seem to hope that, once an agreement was reached on the principles of the understanding which he desired, Lord Rosebery would make a further concession and consent to embody it in a document to be kept secret, similar to that directed by Salisbury to Count Karolyi.[1]

I ought to mention here that Count Kalnoky a few days ago

[1] Vol. I, p. 306.

mentioned the question in a private letter to the Austrian Ambassador, and recommended him to tell Lord Rosebery that Russia was perhaps not, as is always assumed here, on the point of striking a blow at Turkey for the purpose of gaining a passage through the Straits. But it is conceivable that she will very soon attempt to approach the Powers on the subject and point out how impossible the present situation is for Russia; at the same time raising the question, what indulgence, if any, can be granted to Russia regarding the right of passage.

If I understand Count Deym aright, Count Kalnoky added in clear terms that it would be scarcely possible to foretell off-hand such a démarche on the Russian Government's part without further examination, and Lord Rosebery would therefore do well to examine this side of the question and scrutinise it more closely.

If I am not mistaken, it may be assumed that Count Kalnoky's aim is to provide for the case of Russia's attempting a démarche with the Powers regarding the Straits by arriving at a common understanding with England; also perhaps to obtain a tighter hold on the latter and deter her from breaking away suddenly, in case Austria should find an opportunity for a peaceful agreement on the Straits question.

I should respectfully mention that the Austrian Ambassador sets great store on including the Imperial Government in the exchange of ideas now proceeding between Austria and England. He spoke unmistakably in this sense in Vienna, and continues to press Lord Rosebery to keep me informed of the negotiations, that have so far taken place, and especially of his, Lord Rosebery's, latest statements. Count Deym tells me that two days ago the Minister was still undecided on this point, and said that the only answer I should give him was that without instructions I could not offer an opinion on such a matter. Count Deym's answer to him was that he could not expect anything different from me, so long as he, as in his last conversation with me, made the proviso that he was only speaking personally, and not officially.

My humble opinion is that Lord Rosebery thinks it more advantageous to agree, if possible, first with Austria on the principles of an understanding, in the hope that then the Vienna Cabinet, being friendly with us, will succeed in coming to an agreement directly with us.

I myself shall avoid starting the subject with Lord Rosebery, until Your Excellency instructs me differently.

IX. 144

MEMORANDUM BY COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *April 23rd*, 1894

Herr von Szögyény referred again to-day to the Anglo-Austrian conversations and handed me three extracts from Count Kal-

noky's despatches. The old points were repeated, and I have only to note the following.

Having given our reasons for avoiding any engagement with England, I added that we were trying to turn Russia away from France and that we might succeed in this in the course of the year. But we should risk failure, if we made it possible for England to report to Russia any words of ours unfavourable to her on the Dardanelles question. Herr von Szögyény urged the importance of previous discussion, in case Russia should soon take a step towards peace. I denied this importance and represented that it could not be known beforehand in what form Russia would express her wishes. The sole right of free passage might be demanded for Russian war-ships only, or it might be for those of all nations, or it might be for the Dardanelles forts to be occupied or perhaps to be dismantled.

Herr von Szögyény kept returning to the question of what Count Kalnoky was to say to Lord Rosebery about us; he was pressing for a reply. I answered, better say nothing; besides Count Kalnoky was such an experienced diplomat, that he would certainly be able to find a friendly answer, inoffensive to England, but promising her nothing.

He then asked if we still stood by the Treaty of Berlin. I said yes. Finally he said that he could have said that himself, but that Count Kalnoky would have preferred a different answer.

CHAPTER XIX

THE MOROCCO QUESTION, 1892–5

[The foreign policy of the Liberal Government of 1892 was not greatly different from that of the Conservatives under Lord Salisbury. This was mainly due to the fact that Mr. Gladstone left Lord Rosebery very independent in his department, and Lord Rosebery was largely in agreement with Lord Salisbury's methods.

The intrigues on the subject of Morocco, which came to a head during the Liberal term of Office, involved Germany, France, Spain and Italy. The three latter were desperately anxious to secure a share of any concessions wrung from the Sultan and were also afraid of an increase in England's influence, which had been slightly on the wane since the death of Sir John Drummond Hay.

Germany's main object was to prevent France from seizing land which would enable her to join Algeria to an Atlantic port by a railway. Her constant effort was to try and force England to act with Italy and Spain against France. It seems that the threat was enough, for although England observed a strictly conciliatory policy, the French made no serious advance towards Tuat before the Conservative return to power in 1895, when it became clear that their opportunity had gone by. Six years were to pass, before Morocco again took a prominent place in European policy.]

VIII. 322

BARON VON ROTENHAN, DEPUTY-SECRETARY OF STATE, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT VON TATTENBACH, IN TANGIER,
August 10th, 1892

Telegram. Secret.

The London Cabinet announces that Sir Charles Euan Smith has asked for a British ship to be sent to Tangier, as being necessary for safety and desirable for the restoration of order. Please telegraph whether you consider conditions menacing to this extent.

German Note.

Count Tattenbach replied on August 11th in the negative. The disturbances in the country were in no way menacing to the safety of the Europeans.

Please mention the above to no one. Now that we have a new British Government before us, we have to maintain greater reserve than ever, without failing, however, to observe all formalities, especially in dealing with the Sultan.

BARON VON ROTENHAN TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *August 11th*, 1892

I beg you to take note of the enclosed reports in cipher [1] from Tangier and to make use of them, when possible. They show, amongst other points, that Smith has been trying to mollify France by procuring the Tuat district for her.

As regards the Moorish question, we remain, as before, favourable to the British efforts, where they are directed towards concluding a commercial treaty, but in all other directions we maintain a greater reserve, since we have to deal with a new Government with unknown tendencies.

VIII. 323

BARON VON ROTENHAN TO COUNT VON TATTENBACH, IN TANGIER, *September 14th*, 1892

I have received your report of August 26th. Although I feel no general objection to your having warned Tores [2] against giving too much scope to the French influence, I will take this opportunity of reminding you that our general policy with regard to Morocco points to an attitude of reserve and observation. As for the aforesaid negotiations of the French Minister with the Moorish Government, it will be well for you to report here at once any cases in which you think it advisable to work in opposition to the French influence, if it is gaining the upper hand.

VIII. 324

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *November 18th*, 1892

Cipher.

After a casual mention of the French Mission to Fez, about which Lord Rosebery seemed to have no further news, we talked of Tuat, and the Minister remarked that he did not think it practicable to intervene on the point against France.

German Note.

Count d'Aubigny, the French Minister at Tangier, travelled in September, 1892, to the Sultan's Court at Fez and attempted to work in the interests of France there.

VIII. 324

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *June 21st*, 1893

I beg to enclose for your information a copy of a report by the Imperial Minister at Tangier of June 13th, regarding a conversation he has had with his British colleague. A remark of Sir West Ridgeway's seems curious, to the effect that, if the Sultan

[1] Not given. [2] Moorish Foreign Minister.

were encouraged in his resistance against the French action, the Sultan would ask for material assistance, and if this was not granted him, he would come to an understanding with the French. These words are all the more striking, since the British representative must be perfectly well aware that the slightest demonstration by the interested Powers would suffice to deter the French from advancing into Tuat. It is to be concluded from Sir West's statement that his standpoint is similar to that of his predecessor, Euan Smith, and that he believes that, if no obstacle were placed in the way of France's taking possession of Tuat, she would show even more readiness to allow England to take Tangier and the surroundings of Cape Spartel.

As Sir West Ridgeway is shortly giving up his post, his views are of no further practical interest; but it will be interesting to observe how far his successor's attitude points to a similar view of the situation. It will be possible to judge from it whether this view is personal to Sir West or is to be put down to instructions from London.

I beg you to make use of the enclosed report,[1] as far as you think fit, with Lord Rosebery. If you think it right to make it an occasion for discussing the above questions with the Minister, I leave it entirely to your discretion. There is the possibility that a stirring up of these questions might look as if we were interesting ourselves in a more active British policy in Morocco. On the other hand, it would be useful to suggest to Lord Rosebery that the direct value of German friendship for England lies less on the business side—Commercial Treaty with Zanzibar, telegraph line in East Africa—than in the sphere of the great political questions.

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *December 7th*, 1893

Cipher telegram.

Lord Rosebery announces that a few days ago he intimated very confidentially to Señor Moret[2] that no objection would be raised here, if Spain wished to take all or part of the Melilla peninsula for the better protection of her settlement there (The EMPEROR: *'Nor should I object'*), and in fact that there would be readiness on England's part, without appearing in the foreground, to approach the other Powers in support of the idea.

Señor Moret thanked him for the offer, but at the same time begged Lord Rosebery for a little delay.

[1] Not given.

[2] Spanish Foreign Minister in Sagasta's Cabinet since April, 1893

German Note.

Early in October the Riffi had attacked the Spanish territory of Melilla, and there was heavy fighting. At the end of November Marshal Martinez Campos was despatched there with two Army Corps.

VIII. 326–7

Bernard von Bülow, in Rome, to the Chancellor, Count von Caprivi, *February 28th*, 1894

Very confidential.

Baron Blanc visited me a few days ago, and I was able to inform him that the Memorandum, in which he recounted his reasons for believing in a Franco-Spanish rapprochement, had been read with interest in Berlin. The Foreign Minister was evidently excited by this, and he told me of still further symptoms pointing to an increasing intimacy between Madrid and Paris. I related to him how openly the French representative at Tangier, prompted doubtless from above, had suggested to his Spanish colleague [1] that Spain should occupy Tangier. Making use of the arguments supplied to me by Your Excellency, I added that a Spanish occupation of Tangier would make Spain an ally of France, just as surely as a British occupation of it would make England an enemy of France.

Baron Blanc took up these hints with vigour. He considered it a great advantage for Italy that England had won a firm foothold in Egypt. It would be equally, and indeed, more advantageous, if Great Britain laid hands on Tangier. England's establishment at Tangier would really be equivalent to a firm Anglo-Italian Alliance, which was desired by Italy. The only question, continued the Minister, was how England was to be induced to occupy Tangier. He was convinced that England would not decide to do so, before Spain made genuine preparations to occupy it. England would only take action at Tangier in order to prevent others from seizing it. The Minister considered, therefore, that it was to the interest of Italy and her allies till further notice, if not actually to encourage Spain and her French backers in Morocco, at any rate not to interfere with them. I remarked that it might be advisable to make clear to the present rather timid British Cabinet that it must take opportune, i.e., immediate precautions against a surprise attack on Tangier by Spain. Baron Blanc replied: 'In my opinion England will not pluck up courage to enter Tangier, until the danger of Spain's anticipating her becomes very imminent. Once there is this acute danger, England will intervene, for she cannot possibly allow the key to the Mediterranean to fall into foreign hands.'

Baron Blanc recognises that it will be foolish of Italy to

[1] Marquis Potesta de Fornari.

approach Great Britain with demands for compensation, before the latter shall have executed her *coup de main*. Once the British were in Tangier, the Minister added, Italy would easily obtain from them—' for instance in Tripolis '—what could not now be granted to her.

Signor Crispi cannot free himself from certain prejudices in the Morocco affair which disturb his outlook. The President of the Council is always filled with the fear that other Powers—France or England, Spain or Russia—may acquire territory in Africa, whilst Italy goes empty away. He admitted to me that it would be better if England, rather than Spain, were the door-keeper of the Mediterranean. Signor Crispi fears, however, that under certain circumstances England might occupy Tangier, and yet not fall into irreconcilable antagonism to France. Once in possession of Tangier, England might perhaps try to come to terms with the French by concessions in Tunis, Tripolis and the Moroccan hinterland. Where would Italy be then? It would be safest, for Italy to work for a quick and peaceful solution of the Morocco affair; the most advisable, to maintain the *status quo* in Tangier; the worst, if France found opportunity for further acquisitions. I shall make it my business, both directly and through Baron Blanc, to win the Prime Minister over to a more far-sighted view of the Morocco affair.

Finally I should mention very confidentially that I was able to call the attention of His Majesty, King Humbert, to the importance of the Tangier question for Italy's future. The King listened to my arguments with interest and remarked finally: 'The stronger the British are in the Mediterranean, the more firmly they establish themselves there, and the greater their antagonism against France becomes, the better it will be for Italy.'

German Note.

After long negotiations between Marshal Martinez Campos and the Moorish Government an Agreement was reached on March 5th, 1894, according to which the Sultan was to compensate Spain by the payment of 20 million pesetas. The Spanish territory at Melilla was to be protected by a Neutral Zone.

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *June 11th*, 1894

Cipher telegram.

The Earl of Kimberley, whose news from Tangier agrees with ours, said to me to-day that he intends to come to an agreement with ourselves and Spain on the question of the attitude to be adopted towards the events in Morocco.

German Note.

The Sultan Muley Hassan died on June 7th, 1894. The accession of

Abdul Aziz threatened to be accompanied by serious internal disturbances in Morocco. For this reason the Spanish Government urged that the young Sultan should be recognised.

VIII. 329

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *June 12th*, 1894

Telegram. Extract.

Your telegram of the 11th received.

Spain also has made a similar suggestion to us. But the way in which Spain in the economic, and England in the colonial field, show their gratitude to us for our successful co-operation in settling peacefully the Melilla question is not calculated to induce us to make further efforts. The most we should do would be to send a war-ship into Moorish waters for the protection of the Germans there. . . .

German Note.

All commercial treaty negotiations between Spain and Germany were dropped from the middle of May, 1894, because of the failure of the Spanish Parliament to ratify a German-Spanish Commercial Treaty in the summer of 1893. The consequence of this was that Spain immediately brought her maximum tariff into force against Germany, with the result that all further negotiations were broken off. Also, from May, 1894, relations between England and Germany were disturbed by the dispute over the Congo settlement.[1]

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT VON TATTENBACH, IN TANGIER, *June 15th*, 1894

Telegram.

Spain is urging the recognition (of the new Sultan). England and France must have agreed to wait. Italy is holding back, because she like ourselves is dissatisfied with Spain's economic attitude. We have promised to inform Italy in good time when we think the moment has come for recognition.

VIII. 330

BERNARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *June 21st*, 1894

As I have already been able to explain, the leading idea that influences Signor Crispi in the matter of events in North Africa is that above all any increase of the French colonial possessions there must be prevented. With this in his mind the Prime Minister wishes the *status quo* in Morocco to be maintained. He is therefore unwilling to appear there in opposition to Great Britain, because he fears that, once cast loose from Italy, she would consent to a partition of Morocco between France and Spain. Such a partition—without anything falling to Italy—is

[1] Cf. Chapter XXII.

the spectre, which in the Moorish question is always before the naturally impressionable and nervous Prime Minister.

My British colleague, Sir Clare Ford, told me in confidence he was sure that France would be ready to divide Morocco with Spain. France wanted the South-east part of the country, i.e., the territory East of Muluja and South of the Atlas. If she had these districts—and with them the possibility of connecting by rail the Province of Oran with the Atlantic Ocean, somewhere near Cape Nun—France would give up the North-western part of Morocco. Very cautiously, but unmistakably, my British colleague indicated that if England obtained Tangier, he would not much mind what became of the rest of Morocco. Sir Clare Ford spoke in ironical terms of the Italian interests in Morocco. The Paris *Temps* had said, not incorrectly, that Italy had nothing whatever to look for there.

In discussing the Moorish question I have been most careful to maintain great reserve (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*'), and, in consideration of the unsettled differences between England and Germany,[1] I have studied to observe an attitude of caution and expectancy in the question with my acquaintances here, and especially with the Italian Ministers. (The EMPEROR: '*I agree.*')

VIII. 332

BERNARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *October 7th*, 1894

Extract. Confidential.

. . . Baron Blanc continues to be full of the desire to isolate France on the Morocco question. He finds no little cause for annoyance at the news that now Spain, now England, are joining hands with France in Morocco. The Minister spoke with irritation of Lord Kimberley and his Francophil tendencies.

I was able to explain to Baron Blanc that, whilst we had no first-class interest in the Morocco affair and must naturally therefore maintain a certain reserve, our attitude regarding it was to a large extent inspired by the desire to keep ourselves free to support the Italian Government's standpoint, in view of the moment when the latter should have reached the understanding, which it aimed at, with the British Government.

VIII. 333

BERNARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *October 8th*, 1894

Extract. Confidential.

. . . The possibility that the French may acquire a part of Morocco continues to preoccupy the leader of the Italian Govern-

[1] See note above.

ment. With this fear before him, Signor Crispi wishes, as little as Baron Blanc, to see Spain go with France. I indicated to the Prime Minister that it would be England's affair to draw Spain away from France. 'That is quite right,' answered Signor Crispi, 'the British should take care to separate Spain from France. But instead of this, the British themselves are running after France, or at least they are giving in to her too much.' (The EMPEROR: '*I agree.*')

I touched on the present diplomatic tension between France and England, and Signor Crispi said that he did not believe that it would result in a conflict. As regarded Madagascar, England would give in as in most other questions in dispute between her and France. Only in Egypt could the British not draw back. It would be impossible for any British Government to clear out of Egypt. Therefore, the Nile country was and would remain the point, where it would be most difficult to harmonise British and French interests, and where they would soonest overlap each other.

VIII. 334

BARON BLANC, IN ROME, TO SIR CLARE FORD, BRITISH AMBASSADOR, *November 30th*, 1894

Copy, unsigned, delivered at the Berlin Foreign Office by Count Lanza, the Italian Ambassador, March 5th, 1895.

Le Gouvernement du Roi a donné ordre à ses Agents, pour les affaires du Maroc, de procéder entièrement d'accord avec l'Angleterre, et il a exprimé au Gouvernement Espagnol la conviction que celui-ci, en suivant la même ligne, assurerait les intérêts communs de l'Espagne et de l'Italie dans la Méditerranée ; l'Italie ayant lieu de compter que l'appui de ses alliés ne lui aurait pas manqué dans cette politique pacifique et conservatrice.

Mais d'une part, le Gouvernement Espagnol a témoigné de considérer plutôt la question marocaine comme étant avant tout une affaire de transactions franco-espagnoles, où il ne pourrait procéder que d'accord avec la France.

Il serait superflu de rappeler nos efforts pour le détourner d'un contrôle collectif sur les douanes et d'un prêt au Maroc offert par un syndicat français pour l'indemnité de Mélilla. Si ce contrôle et ce prêt ont pu être impêchés, en revanche nous n'avons pas réussi à faire partager par l'Espagne le juste point de vue du Sultan du Maroc qui dénonce l'abus des protections politiques de la France sur les puissants chefs des Tribus Marocaines, comme un péril pour l'indépendance et l'intégrité du Maroc et comme un légitime motif d'exclure des Consulats politiques qui exerceraient cette protection à Fez ; l'Espagne a même sacrifié en fait son

droit à avoir un Consul local et commercial, comme l'Angleterre, à Fez, plutôt que de se séparer de la France sur la question des protections politiques sur d'influents sujets marocains. A nos conseils de préférer une entente avec l'Angleterre les hommes d'État Espagnols ont objecté une opposition fondamentale qui, comme le soutenait le presse Franco-Espagnole, existerait entre les intérêts espagnols au Maroc et ceux de la Puissance qui occupe Gibraltar, et ils n'ont pas dissimulé qu'une action tutélaire éventuelle de l'Angleterre à Tanger serait considérée par eux comme contraire aux intérêts de l'Espagne aussi bien que de la France, tandis que l'Italie y aurait vu un élément de sécurité pour les intérêts méditerranéens Italo-Espagnols. En un mot, l'Espagne nous a paru inspirée, en matière politique aussi bien que commerciale, par l'idée de s'assurer si non des partages de territoires, du moins des participations avec la France quand celle-ci mettrait à réalisation ses projets dans les parties Est et Sud du Maroc ; et pour cela de donner à la France des gages de fait que l'Espagne n'est point liée aux intérêts de la Triple Alliance ; et de se servir, dans ses transactions avec la France—pour en obtenir des meilleures conditions—des avantages même que lui donnait l'appui de l'Italie, appui que le Cabinet de Madrid présentait à Paris comme une base d'entente franco-hispano-italienne. Notre appui risquait donc dans certaines circonstances, d'être détourné de son but et de nuire à l'entente hispano-anglaise que nous désirions au contraire faciliter.

D'autre part, l'Angleterre, lorsqu'elle a bien voulu correspondre à notre desir de marcher d'accord avec elle avant tout au Maroc, l'a fait en nous annonçant à plusieurs reprises des accords déjà pris entre elle et la France, et auxquels elle nous conviait à nous joindre. Il nous sera permis d'observer seulement à cet égard que l'Espagne était par là d'autant plus encouragée dans ses tendances à des transactions avec la France elle-même.

Le Gouvernement du Roi, entendant de ne pas dévier du principe que la Triple Alliance et l'Angleterre ont dans la Méditerranée des intérêts communs, ne pouvait se prêter aux équivoques qui s'étaient manifestés dans la politique Espagnole. Nous avons l'entière confiance que tôt ou tard la communauté d'intérêts dont je viens de parler sera pratiquement reconnue par le Cabinet de St. James, et nous n'avons pas l'intention de nous plaindre pour ce qu'il a pu y avoir de défavorable à l'Italie dans les transactions anglo-françaises en Afrique ; mais l'avenir de la politique espagnole ne saurait nous inspirer une confiance égale. Nous ne voulons pas nous faire juges des appréciations des Ambassadeurs d'Allemagne et d'Autriche-Hongrie (Count Dubsky) à Madrid, qui considerent l'Espagne comme tombée dans ce

qu'on appelle déjà la zone d'influence Française ; nous ne rapprocherons pas non plus ce fait de celui signalé de Constantinople par l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre de la prépondérance réprise en Orient par la France, dont les entreprises sur les voies commerciales de la Tripolitaine au Wadai semblent ne devoir rencontrer aucun obstacle de la part du Gouvernement Ottoman, à ce que nous savons aussi de Vienne. Nous croyons cependant utile en ce qui concerne l'Espagne de l'avertir amicalement en la voyant engagée dans une voie où nous ne pouvons loyalement la suivre ; où, dans l'attente de compensations que pour notre compte nous n'accepterions pas de la France, elle facilite indirectement en ce qui dépend d'elle les entreprises françaises qui menacent de s'étendre depuis le Sud de l'Atlas jusqu'à la baie de Tadjoura ; et que nous serions heureux, soit comme Puissance méditerranéenne, soit comme membre de la Triple Alliance, soit comme solidaire de l'Angleterre en Afrique, de voir Lord Kimberley apprécier dans un esprit équitable et amical ce qu'il est de notre devoir de faire pour que nos intérêts communs cessent de graviter à notre grave détriment vers la France plutôt que vers la Triple Alliance.

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO BERNARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, *January 13th*, 1895

Telegram.

Count Tattenbach reports that the French are preparing to move against Tuat. Since the military forces in Algeria are at present occupied with Madagascar, the choice of this moment for an advance can hardly be explained otherwise than that France fears an early change of Government and policy in England.

Our standpoint is identical with that of 1890 ; that is, we are advising Italy to do nothing in the Tuat question without England.

If Morocco consents to the annexation of Tuat, the maxim *'volenti non fit injuria'* meets the case.

But if Morocco were to turn to the Italian Government for advice and assistance, it would be a favourable opportunity for the latter to force the British Government to show its colours, by asking in London whether England is ready to join with Italy in bringing the question of the rights of property in Tuat before the Powers. Morocco would naturally be obliged to promise to submit to the decision of the Powers.

If Rosebery's Cabinet refuses everything, Italy would then advise Morocco to raise a vehement protest against the French invasion so as to keep her hands free for the future, but to do nothing more.

We know for certain that England is extremely anxious that the Moorish coast opposite Gibraltar shall not fall exclusively

into the hands of France and Spain. Every step taken by France increases this danger. England must realise at once that no one will work for her, unless she does so herself.

VIII. 339

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT TATTENBACH, AT TANGIER, *January 28th*, 1895

Count Münster [1] does not believe in any movement in force against Tuat by the French in the near future, but in a gradual advance by the erection of forts.

Lord Kimberley also does not believe that the French have any plans against Tuat now.

Even so, the advice we have given the Moorish Government remains good for future use.

[1] Ambassador in Paris.

CHAPTER XX

THE GERMAN COLONIES AND SAMOA, JUNE, 1893–MAY, 1894

[In all the dealings of Great Britain with Germany relating to colonial affairs there was always the difficulty of explaining to the German Foreign Office the nature of the relations between the various departments of Government and between the self-governing British colonies and the Mother Country. The German colonies were all Crown colonies and were controlled absolutely from Berlin, and the notion of colonial self-government in the British sense was in German eyes incomprehensible and unsound. Bismarck and his successors showed considerable irritation whenever the London Foreign Office tried to explain to them that it was not possible or customary to coerce the colonial Governments in their domestic policy.

The following chapter shows this lack of a common meeting-ground very clearly.]

German Note.

Ever since the Spring of 1893 there was fighting between the German garrison of South-west Africa and the Hottentot Chief, Hendrik Witboy, which made it necessary to reinforce the troops with artillery. The Cape authorities opposed the landing of guns in Walfisch Bay, which was surrounded by the German territory, and the British Government at first hesitated to recommend the Cape authorities to accede to the German wish.

VIII. 397

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *June 2nd*, 1893

Very confidential. Extract.

In this special case he (Lord Rosebery) could tell me confidentially that he had held from the first that our wish to land the guns necessary to protect our interests in South-west Africa was a very natural one, and one to which there could be no objection here, and he had acted on it as far as he could. But I must take into consideration that the British Government possessed no means of breaking by force the Cape Government's opposition, once it was raised, and that he, Lord Rosebery, was personally no better able to oblige his colleague in the Colonial Office to give up the firm opinion he had formed by reason of the news from the Cape. He had therefore to consider it as a success—by no means

easily won—that he had induced Lord Ripon to propose that the shipment should be made in a merchant ship. This, if accepted, he could assure me, would partly allay the anxiety, which was genuinely felt here, that the natives would look on the landing of our guns as participation by England and might proceed to take hostile action against the almost unprotected Walfisch Bay.

I replied . . . that quite apart from the present case, which we had been bound to regard as an obvious one, those in Berlin were quite correct in thinking that in all such cases we could not deal with any Department, but only through him, with the British Government, of whose good will we could judge from the way in which it deals with the present question. If the Foreign Minister was faced with opposition from a departmental Minister, we should have a right to expect the Cabinet to pay no attention to it and that they would attach greater importance to the maintenance of reciprocal assistance and support, the necessity of which has already been recognised, than to the objections raised by individual authorities, which were often exaggerated and finicking.

Since he, Lord Rosebery, agreed with me that we must to-day speak to each other quite frankly in private, he must allow me to touch on political benefits. I must remind him that England had derived real advantages from our friendship, and was still doing so. Not only had we, as he knew, always generously supported all British desires in Egypt, without any interests of our own, but also our attitude in European politics was, as Lord Salisbury had acknowledged to me more than once, England's best guarantee against the possibility of a French attack, which was never to be ignored and was unthinkable without our consent.

Lord Rosebery replied that he acknowledged these political advantages from our friendship no less than his predecessor. He would not deny that it was all the more painful to him personally that this support in Egypt had a short time before been suddenly withdrawn, and that in two simultaneous declarations, in Cairo by Count Leyden, and in Berlin to the British Ambassador, an essential change in our policy had been announced, which he was honestly convinced had been in no way merited from us, and which might have a fatal effect on his position in the Cabinet.

German Note.

For the German threat of a change of front in the Egyptian question, following England's unfriendly attitude on the question of Railway construction in Asia Minor, cf. p. 180.

Lord Rosebery added that such an occurrence as our declarations at that time regarding a change in our Egyptian policy

might easily force him to retire. He remarked: 'You will certainly agree with me that it is extremely doubtful if you would then get a better Foreign Secretary here.'

I replied to the Minister that his remaining in office would be highly welcome to us, and that he must attribute the persistence, with which we had pursued the Railway question, to the great interest we were obliged to take in that subject for every reason. If he would realise this, he would have to admit that the attitude of the British Ambassador in Constantinople, who took a decidedly hostile line and was apparently joining the French against us, was bound to fill us with anxiety as to the intentions of the British Cabinet, as we could not know if in these circumstances his, Rosebery's, efforts were likely to be successful in overcoming the opposition of the British Embassy, the anti-German tendencies of the British members of the Public Debt Commission and perhaps also of certain members of the British Cabinet. Nevertheless, I knew that in Cairo we did not go so far as to proclaim a change in our policy. Count Leyden confined himself to declaring to Lord Cromer that, in case he had not already expressed his agreement with a measure at that time wished for by England, he must withhold this agreement in view of the attitude adopted by the British Embassy against our interests in the question of the Turkish railway.

On this Lord Rosebery assured me that he was well informed as to the events of that time and thought he knew for certain that in Cairo and also in Berlin we had declared to the British Ambassador an alteration in form of our Egyptian policy, which might prove fatal to his, the Minister's, position. He added with some emphasis more or less as follows:

'You know that I follow my predecessor's foreign policy and am trying to continue it. My position is still difficult, although, as you will have seen on various occasions, Mr. Gladstone does not put obstacles in my way, and in his speeches on foreign policy voices my views, when necessary. But I can only hope for a further and permanent success for my policy, as also for security in my position, if the Powers, which favour my aspirations, refrain from making my task more difficult, as you did at that time in Egypt, but rather make it easier as far as possible by their help.' Among such questions Lord Rosebery numbered the publication of the Commercial Treaty at Zanzibar, which would be of great value to him because of the French. . . .

At the end of our very friendly conversation Lord Rosebery sent for the Under-Secretary and gave him some instructions. When I asked him what he had decided, he answered: 'Je viens de brûler mes vaisseaux en chargeant Sir Philip Currie de faire savoir au Ministre des Colonies que pour des raisons de haute

politique je dois insister qu'il vous fasse obtenir la permission que vous demandez.' . . .

Owing to the store set on our friendship by every British Cabinet, we might perhaps have pressed our claim to introduce our guns by force, but it would have left a bad impression in the mind of Lord Rosebery, our only reliable friend in the British Cabinet. . . .

VIII. 402

BARON VON ROTENHAN, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *September 10th*, 1893

For some time past the British Government has been showing its unfriendliness in its treatment of colonial questions more strongly than hitherto. Quite lately this change has been shown in the following points, which have been communicated to you and are selected as an example.

1. Recruiting of Chinese coolies at Singapore for the New Guinea Company's plantations used to go on unimpeded. But in these last months obstacles have been suddenly put in its way by the British authorities. . . .

2. Also in the recent events in German South-west Africa the British have not taken up that friendly attitude towards the Imperial Government, on which the latter had counted. . . . The British authorities have obstructed the passage of the arms necessary for the restoration of order, and have fostered the view that it is a struggle between two belligerent Powers with equal rights, to both of whom Great Britain stands as a neutral, and that she is therefore bound to treat a notorious robber chieftain, like Hendrik Witboy, on an equal footing with the German Government. Thus it is that the British Magistrate at Walfisch Bay allows Hendrik Witboy to be helped in every possible manner ; also the despatch of a British war-ship to Walfisch Bay has caused the native population and the settlers to imagine wrongly that the rebels will find shelter and consideration from the British. The friendly reception accorded to Witboy in British territory should on the contrary have been refused, even though it might have been assumed that he would not use his safe refuge in British territory for the purpose of preparing fresh attacks on the German district. This however is hardly likely.

3. A further proof of the lack of consideration shown us lately in colonial matters by the Government of Great Britain is seen in that Government's attitude in regard to the settlement of the spheres of influence in the hinterland of the Cameroons. An agreement was arrived at in 1886 by treaty, by which the frontier line between the two spheres was to end close to the town of Yola,

but the British Government now seeks to move this point to our disadvantage to a distance of about 45 kilometres away from Yola and to induce us to give up our treaty rights without compensation. . . .

For us the fact remains that all British colonial authorities systematically show ill-will towards our wishes, aspirations and *rights* in all parts, where even a merely passive agreement on the part of the British Authorities would be useful and helpful to us.

Our public opinion has become more and more firmly convinced of this by the news that has filtered in from various quarters. It has caused excitement and annoyance especially in those circles to whose feelings and views we owe the greatest consideration by furthering our colonial aims.

The public annoyance against England is already expressing itself in our Press, and this will appear with renewed force as soon as the Reichstag meets in the autumn and begins dealing with colonial questions. There will be voices demanding that the Imperial Government shall act with the same lack of consideration which has helped other states, when in collision with genuine or alleged British rights. Especially will it be difficult for the Imperial Government to justify to the country its general policy of support of England without direct reciprocity, particularly in Egypt, as England now shows herself unfriendly to us in every colonial question, however unimportant. The German Reichstag cannot be expected to understand Lord Rosebery's difficulties with his own colonial authorities, and if these continue their unfriendliness in colonial matters, we cannot, in our general political relations with England, maintain a greater reserve than we should otherwise do and which we should wish to do—apart from colonial questions.

I beg Your Excellency to discuss these questions with Lord Rosebery in a friendly tone at a suitable opportunity, and to avoid producing in him the impression that we wish to threaten withdrawal of our former support in the domain of general policy and thereby exert pressure on him for the attainment of our colonial objects. We only wish him to learn the reasons that oblige us to be more cautious and reserved than before with England, and to be prepared for it.

We are far from wishing to doubt Lord Rosebery's honourable desire to be on good terms with us, and this is why we think it essential that he should appreciate the reasons, which may oblige us in future to weigh our support for England's political wishes against her support for us in the colonial field.

VIII. 406–7

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *September 19th*, 1893

Extract.

Sir Philip Currie said that . . . in Australia, where there was known to be a strong feeling against all Chinese immigration, a large annual export of coolies to German New Guinea would certainly arouse much anxiety lest the lack of regular and constant communication by sea between our colonies and Singapore, and at the same time the short distance between New Guinea and Australia, might enable a portion of the coolies, after their contracts had run out, to reach the Australian coast and gain an entrance into that country. Another objection, which he wished to admit openly to me, to the regular export of coolies which we desired, consisted in the genuine anxiety lest China, which already disliked in itself the emigration of its subjects to Singapore, would be displeased at their being shipped to the far distant New Guinea, and would find in the permission conceded by England a welcome pretext for putting obstacles in the way of supplying Singapore with the coolies, which are indispensable there, and for limiting it as much as possible. . . .

It might meet the question, supposing we were granted a regular supply of coolies for our colonies, if, by means of a Note, which could be used in both directions, we delivered an assurance here that the Imperial Government will hold the Company responsible, under all circumstances, for the regular and direct transport of coolies back to Singapore on the lapse of their contracts,—which means that the lack of shipping would have to receive attention,—and at the same time to take all other suitable measures to prevent the smuggling of coolies from New Guinea into Australia.

VIII. 409

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *September 19th*, 1893

Having concluded my conversation with Sir Philip Currie yesterday on the Coolie question, I proceeded to remark that unfortunately this was not the only case in which the colonial authorities had shown themselves disobliging towards us, and that the want of friendly feeling appeared much more sharply in the Witboy affair. I was fully convinced, and this was freely recognised in Berlin also, that on this point also Lord Rosebery had taken the greatest pains to satisfy our justified complaints at the strange behaviour of the Cape authorities and particularly at Walfisch Bay, and to induce in the latter an attitude conformable

with the friendly relations of the two Governments and with the circumstances. There however were the facts, and it must be widely known in Germany that we had, with the greatest trouble here, succeeded in getting orders sent to the authorities in question to allow two guns to be landed, which were urgently needed for reducing the rebellious natives to order ; also that the Magistrate at Walfisch Bay was continuing on friendly terms with Witboy, as if nothing had passed before, and was in fact acting openly on the theory that Witboy was to be regarded as a belligerent Power with equal rights, towards whom the British must observe neutrality. . . .

I had no instructions to meet the case and expected none; but I considered that there would be good reason to suggest here that Witboy should be handed over to us. . . .

Sir Philip Currie would not discuss the question of handing Witboy over to us, but said that Lord Rosebery, as I knew, had already told the Colonial Office that it was essential above all to prevent Witboy from misusing British territory as a base. After my last conversation with the Minister, the latter had mentioned to him, Currie, my expressed wish that the instructions to Capetown should be exact and comprehensive, and that the authorities there should be ordered to break off all relations with Witboy. Currie could assure me that he would write in this sense to the Colonial Office and support our wish.

It remains to be seen whether the Colonial Office accords with this demand and does not try to shirk making an unwelcome suggestion to Cape Colony. I shall not fail to keep watch and report further on the affair.

I ought not to close this report without mentioning a remark which I was able to put in during this conversation. Having indicated that the various disobliging acts of the British colonial authorities towards us were widely known and were bound to make a bad impression, I said that in this respect also the coming meeting of the Reichstag filled me with some apprehension. The party, which showed special interest in our colonial development, and would probably be the one to protest most loudly against the British colonial authorities, was, as I thought I had told him before, indispensable to the Government, so that I could not help fearing that it would find difficulty in standing up against that party's pressure.

I have no doubt that this hint was understood and will soon find its way to Lord Rosebery with an appropriate commentary.

German Note.

Count Hatzfeldt's suggestions were, in fact, successful in stopping for a time the unwillingness of the Colonial Office to oblige Germany ; . . .

especially in the negotiations for delimiting the Anglo-German spheres in the Cameroons. . . . (See the next despatch.)

VIII. 413

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *April 14th*, 1894

In my latest conversation with him, Lord Kimberley discussed over again the Franco-German Cameroons Agreement, dealt with in my report of March 28th. The Minister was clearly worried by the expected French advance in the neighbourhood of Lake Chad, and asked repeatedly whether it would not be to the interest of England and Germany in that event to pursue a joint policy and to agree together on all questions arising there, so as to counter the French schemes as much as possible. I confined myself provisionally to remarking that formerly I had always been in favour of an attitude being assumed jointly by England and Germany in colonial questions, especially in Africa ; but I had not found sufficient appreciation of this idea here and so had given it up. Besides, some years ago an Agreement concluded here by Lord Salisbury had itself opened the way to Lake Chad for the French. Lord Kimberley replied that if at that time they made the mistake here of not coming to an agreement with us over it, it was no good complaining about it, and it would be better to make good what had been missed then.

Finally Lord Kimberley urged me repeatedly to report our conversation to Berlin, and so I beg you earnestly to provide me with instructions how to reply to Lord Kimberley's question.

VIII. 414

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *April 17th*, 1894

Extract.

As regards the position in West Africa, it is sufficient to state that it has been the Royal Niger Company, supported by the British Government, that has brought on the present situation by its overweening attitude, which cannot be reconciled with the provisions of the Congo Act. The detention of the German trader, Hönigsberg, the hindering of free passage up the Niger by vexatious regulations, and the monopolisation of trade, cutting out even the most modest German competition, have prevented any strong German penetration into the hinterland of the Cameroons and assisted the extension of French interests. British policy seems to have calculated that a rapprochement between Germany and France in Africa would be impossible owing to their relations in Europe. This calculation was based on wrong data ; the colonial party in France has sought a rapprochement with the

German colonial party for the very purpose of joining to oppose the unjustified preponderance of the Royal Niger Company and other British interests, which is contrary to the treaties.

The Agreement which has been concluded between France and Germany regarding the Cameroons hinterland, ensures to both parties the possibility of pursuing in common any aim which may profit both of them, and this Germany has tried in vain to obtain from England.

By this Agreement with France Germany has succeeded in obtaining a free hand for her policy in West Africa.

If it is to England's interests to oppose the French aspirations, it is always possible for the British Government to make proposals, which will show proper consideration for Germany's legitimate desires.

VIII. 416

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *April 18th*, 1894

Confidential.

On December 19th last year I sent you a copy of a report by Baron von Saurma, the Imperial Ambassador in Washington (November 8th), describing a conversation on Samoa, which he had had with Mr. Gresham, the Secretary of State. Mr. Gresham then said that the American Government was not at bottom interested in the Condominium over the group of islands. It was doubtful what amount of importance was to be attached to that kind of remark. Other American statesmen have said the same in casual conversation. Is it merely an expression of annoyance because the American Government's participation in the Samoa Treaty has saddled it with troublesome liabilities and other consequences which are uncomfortable to meet, but which more or less have to be met, or is it that the statement covers a real intention to withdraw from the Samoan question? The second alternative seems the less probable, because, if the American Government gave up Samoa, it would have to fear the stirring up of American chauvinism and agitation against itself. In the meantime this consideration seems no longer to trouble the Washington Cabinet and to be replaced by a feeling that it is no longer advisable nor useful for America to cling to the decisions and liabilities of the Samoa Treaty. To this may have especially contributed the recent numerous demands made to the American Government on the basis of the Samoa Treaty, regarding the despatch of war-ships, the appointment of the Land Commission, and other forms of co-operation in settling the complicated conditions in Samoa. The opinion held in leading Government circles in America was recently given in the statement by Senator Morgan, Chairman of the Committee of the Senate on Foreign Affairs, which was pub-

lished in the newspapers. It was to the effect that it was essential to end the Samoa Treaty. Reports from Washington state that the subject has since then been officially brought to the notice of our Ambassador, so that there is no doubt of the American Government's intention for the moment to give up its share in the administration of Samoa—in return perhaps for a coaling station at Pago Pago. I enclose copies of Baron Saurma's reports for your information, coupled with a request to return them.

You know our attitude towards the development of affairs in Samoa, and that the aim that we pursue there is to obtain a German administration. If we manage the matter skilfully, the retirement from the treaty, which America desires, offers us the opportunity of gaining our point. We must not fail to take advantage of the mood of the moment in America, especially as there is no certainty of its lasting, and the American Government may easily decide to change its attitude owing to the consideration it has to pay to the political Parties at home. This is especially to be expected if the question is still undecided, when a fresh Election campaign commences. The Imperial Ambassador in Washington has been instructed by telegraph to inform Mr. Gresham that the Imperial Government will meet the United States in every possible way in their intention to retire from the Samoa Treaty, and that it has no objection in principle to offer. You will agree with me that the mere retirement of America would be of little service to us, if the Treaty continues to be kept up with England, especially as the joint administration, which acts against our interests—although only dual instead of triple—would receive a fresh basis and recognition. Now that America is favourable to our aspirations, the difficulties of our negotiations and efforts will lie in London. If we could succeed in getting the British Government to agree to a German administration in Samoa, this would not only be a satisfactory solution for the considerable local interests that we possess there, but it would mean a political success at home, not at all to be despised. As you know, the Samoan question has exercised public opinion in Germany for years, and it would be very valuable to the Imperial Government to produce a final settlement of this question in a way agreeable to German wishes. I beg you to discuss the affair once again in this sense confidentially with the British Government. How you will do it I must leave to your experienced judgment and your knowledge of personalities in England. It may however be advisable to refer to Lord Rosebery's former expressions of consent and to the impossible present situation in Samoa, which of necessity point to a single control, if peace and order are to be restored there at all. You can easily prove, by reference to the preponderance of German interests in Samoa, that Germany is

the Power to exercise this control, and I call your attention to my despatch of July 25th (not given), which describes the trade conditions in Samoa. It states that beside the two German firms, the Handels- und Plantagengesellschaft and Messrs. Friegs & Co., there is at present not a single British or American business of any size in Samoa, and that the land under cultivation is almost entirely in German hands, so that the British claims put forward on former occasions on the pretext of Australian and especially New Zealand interests, fall to the ground. I also beg you to refer again to the former Samoa-Tonga scheme, if you think it advisable, and I ask you to give your special attention to the present matter, which, as I said before, has for us a political importance far beyond its own intrinsic one,—and to tell the British Government that the fulfilment of our wishes in Samoa will be of special value to us. . . .

VIII. 423

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *April 24th*, 1894

Confidential.

Lord Kimberley was expected in the House of Lords, but before I left him, I threw in the remark that both of us had forgotten to discuss the state of things in Samoa and the most recent attitude of the Americans regarding it.

The Minister repeated with vehemence what had been heard here about the views of the American Government and added that it was now for us to suggest the best thing to happen in Samoa. I replied that, in my opinion, there was no doubt that the best course would be to hand Samoa over to Germany.

The Minister, who evidently did not expect that direct expression of opinion, thought for a little and answered that this view would be widely disagreed with here. I replied that there were good grounds in every direction for this solution, which would guarantee to the other interested Powers an orderly administration to protect their rightful interests, just because German interests were predominant in Samoa. Lord Kimberley said that the last statement had lately been strongly questioned by the parties with interests there. I replied firmly that I could at any moment show him figures to prove the justice of my contention.

There was no time to discuss the matter more in detail, and I thought that there was nothing more to be gained by it at that moment. The Minister was clearly frightened at the thought of opposing the chauvinistic tendencies here in regard to the island in question, and if he is to favour it at all, he will require time to get used to the idea; he will first want to make a statement to Lord Rosebery and learn his views.

I think that Lord Kimberley meanwhile is in no doubt as to my view that we consider Samoa to be the first subject for compensation for any further colonial favours on our part, and that our support is in no wise to be counted upon for an English occupation of the islands, should the Government wish to further such aspirations in any form.

If Lord Kimberley does not himself soon refer to the colonial rapprochement suggested, I intend to try and see the Prime Minister and explain the situation to him. If I know Lord Rosebery, we need not fear, if he thinks co-operation with us at all desirable, that he will be drawn away from this view by any protests. On the other hand I know from experience the disadvantage of showing too great *empressement* here. British statesmen always tend to conclude that one is running after them and take it for a sign of weakness, which they can exploit.

Unless Your Excellency instructs me differently, I shall eventually make it clear to the Prime Minister in unambiguous but friendly tones that he has now to decide whether to secure Germany's further friendly support by granting really ample colonial compensation, or in future to do without it.

VIII. 425

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *April 27th*, 1894

Cipher telegram.

To-day Lord Kimberley said frankly that he was unable to make any suggestions about the future fate of Samoa. He realised that we should not consent to hand it over to England. On the other hand, the feeling against giving it to us was so strong in Australia and with the colonial Party here, that the Government was forced to respect it. He therefore suggested that before going into the question any further, we should at least wait, until it was certain that America really wished to withdraw.

I then visited the Prime Minister, who first said that he had only superficial knowledge of the matter, since Lord Kimberley had said nothing to him about it. I explained the facts, and he added that the movement in New Zealand in favour of annexation was unimportant and need not worry us, as England did not mean to give in to it. But the Government must consider the strong colonial feeling against annexation of the islands by us. If America really withdrew, the best would be therefore to continue the dual Condominium over Samoa.

I do not think that any change can be made at present in this attitude of waiting. But I made it quite plain that we would in no case consent to annexation by England.

Lord Kimberley's words gave me the impression that he deplores America's possible withdrawal on account of the difficulties it may entail, and that he is inclined to advise against it in Washington.

VIII. 425–6

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *May 2nd*, 1894

You reported on April 23rd that Lord Kimberley indicated the desirability of our agreeing, if possible, provisionally with England on a common attitude in those parts of Africa—Togoland in particular—where we have common interests, and where we might be called upon to unite in opposing a further French advance. As regards Anglo-German action in Togoland, which was last mentioned in a despatch of July 1st, 1893, I beg to inform you that the British Ambassador here referred to the subject a short time ago. We delayed dealing with it on account of the negotiations with the French Government over the frontier settlement in the Cameroons, which were going on at the time. I enclose copies of Sir Edward Malet's note (December 29th, 1893) and of my reply (March 8th, 1894) for your information.[1] For reasons known to you there is no inducement for us to be any more forthcoming towards England in this question.

VIII. 426

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *May 10th*, 1894

Cipher.

I met the Prime Minister for a moment at the Court, and he asked me: 'How is the business going?' I said: 'What business do you mean?' He replied: 'All the business between us.' I said: 'It is not going on at all.' After a moment's thought, Lord Rosebery added: 'I beg you not to press us about Samoa and to realise that our difficulties in the matter are just as great as those which are to be faced by your Government. There is only one way out, and that is to leave things in Samoa as they are.' I replied: 'We are not pressing about Samoa and only have to say here that we could not accept any action on the part of New Zealand. You assured me recently that you would not permit such action by your colonies, and I reported this to my Government.'

The Minister confirmed the correctness of this report and repeated that the British Government would not permit such action.

[1] Not given.

Minute by CAPRIVI.

Shown to His Majesty, who commands
1. *that our demands against New Zealand shall be upheld,*
2. *that we wait until America acts, and*
3. *that, if America withdraws from the Treaty, it shall be held to be binding on us no longer, and we are to try to press our claims to Samoa in their fullest extent with England.*

VIII. 430

THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *May 28th*, 1894

Private letter. Extract.

I gather from Your Excellency's report that there is little hope that the British Government will be ready to meet our wishes. It is more likely that Lord Kimberley is using the time to make the Americans also decide unfavourably towards them. It is held here, therefore, that a *fait accompli* should be produced quickly. . . .

The notion has been entertained of disarming the Samoans. . . . I personally have my doubts about that. . . .

I think that until further notice we must apply ourselves to negotiating with England, although this method is round-about and uncertain, and, as Your Excellency said in your telegram of April 27th,[1] it does not allow us to alter our present waiting attitude.

If that is correct, it remains to decide what diplomatic means are at our disposal to bend England to our wishes. I assume that we should not do well to change our general policy of the Anglo-Italian friendship, but I think there could be no objection to our marking our colonial policy by turning more away from England and nearer to France. England's new treaty with the Congo State can easily be a reason for this.

I consider that in all cases, even if we send ships to Samoa, we should inform England. America has not yet withdrawn from the treaty, and we must avoid the appearance of breaking it. Lord Rosebery's suggestion of setting up a dual Condominium could not be accepted by us. Rather would we discuss a partition of the Islands, giving Upolu to us, Savaii to England and Tutuila to America, although this would not be very desirable. . . .

[In 1900 Germany obtained Upolu and Savaii, and America Tutuila.]

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[1] Cf. p. 289.

VIII. 435

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *June 1st*, 1894

Private letter. Secret.

Having reflected fully on the difficult question which Your Excellency has put to me, I beg to state my opinion as follows:

I will first shortly recapitulate the past, as it will make the present situation clearer. After I took up this post, there was a time when the Conservative Cabinet was ready in principle to hand the administration of Samoa over to Germany.[1] It was then my duty, under promise of provisional secrecy, to obtain the consent of Lord Salisbury, who at the same time expected that Washington would be favourable to this plan. I never learnt how it was that we derived no permanent advantage from this unexpectedly favourable disposition on England's part, by procuring a *fait accompli* on the ground of the perpetual unrest, which menaced German interests in particular—even though Washington did not agree to it. England would not then have objected seriously to this. I imagined merely that either Prince Bismarck did not consider the step advisable for reasons of domestic policy, or that he foresaw a risk of serious developments from the then passionate opposition of the Americans, disproportionate to any advantage to be gained by the permanent possession of Samoa.

Without venturing to criticise this policy, the reasons for which are not clearly before me, I think I may express my conviction that the United States would neither have declared war for the sake of Samoa, nor, although our action in Samoa would then have raised some excitement and a great outcry, would they otherwise have caused us any serious or lasting troubles.

If this supposition is correct, it is all the more regrettable that this opportunity passed unused, since the situation, so far as England is concerned, has become continuously less favourable to our lawful wishes with regard to Samoa. The interest felt in Samoa by certain of the British colonies, has increased, though but little justified by circumstances, and is supported by the numerous parties, who start with the conviction that England should have first choice of all colonial objects that are possible of attainment. Even Lord Salisbury, who certainly wishes to meet our desires, could not escape now from the increasing pressure of these influences. Some years ago, when he was still in power, the Samoa question arose in conversation between us, and he told me quite frankly that he would be unable to hold out against this pressure any longer, and that, now that we had missed

[1] Cf. Vol. I, pp. 243, 375.

our opportunity, he could with the best will in the world no longer assist the German claim to Samoa.

If that statesman, who for political reasons set much store on our friendship, thought himself no longer strong enough to defend here and in the Colonies the idea of ceding the islands to us, the situation now is far less favourable, since the present Cabinet is much weaker than its predecessor and undoubtedly aims at avoiding anything which may increase the number of its opponents in and out of Parliament. . . .

I am convinced that it was from the start a miscalculation on Count Herbert Bismarck's part, when he attached to Lord Rosebery an increased political importance due to the friendship of the former Imperial Chancellor, which was procured for him and cleverly exploited.[1]

After eight years' observation I know the Prime Minister's character pretty accurately, and I know what we have to expect from him. I welcomed his appointment to the Foreign Office as a fortunate event politically, because he was the only competent statesman amongst Gladstone's adherents from whom we had to fear no serious deviation from Lord Salisbury's foreign policy, and especially no leaning towards France. The weakness that he showed later in foreign questions, could not be foreseen then. But I never expected that he would show any special favour to Germany and expect it still less now, since his exaggerated personal sensitiveness has been aroused again by our rejection of some of his expressed wishes, e.g., the laying of Mr. Rhodes's telegraph line across our East African territory, and lately by our attitude in the Egyptian Conversion question.[2] He believes quite naively that he has heaped kindnesses on us, by seeing, of course not without some trouble, that we obtained coolies at Singapore,[3] and by inducing the Niger Company to receive and let pass through in a friendly manner a German expedition, which was expected here to be going to help in stemming the French schemes of expansion. Added to all this, as far as colonial questions are concerned, Lord Rosebery considers that his predecessor, Lord Salisbury, gave away too much to us in our colonial Agreement of 1890, and that he himself would not have done so.

It is very clear to me that Lord Rosebery's irritation against us is to be ascribed partly to the fact that we would not listen to his hints regarding a political understanding in the Mediterranean, etc., and he may imagine that his attempts to draw Austria into the sphere of British interests was perhaps wrecked by our influence in Vienna. . . .

I do not think that it will suit either our position or our policy

[1] Cf. Vol. I, pp. 217–18. [2] Cf. p. 297. [3] Cf. p. 281.

to offer *political* concessions in the present case, or to help to combine political and colonial questions, in our dealings with England. In my humble opinion it is regrettable that colonial disagreements cannot be prevented altogether from reacting on our political relations with England, and we ought to keep them apart as much as possible. At present I see no danger that England will make the colonial disputes a reason for altering her policy as regards Italy.

German Note.

. . . Although Count Hatzfeldt was against political concession to England, he thought something might be conceded in the colonies, but at the same time he remarked that ' there is nothing in the colonies that we could give up, without suffering a loss greater than what Samoa is worth.'

But circumstances unexpectedly favour another method, which we might consider using against England. It offers us a means of exerting at various points a real pressure, which has not been done hitherto, nor has been understood here sufficiently. Apart from Egypt, where we can oppose all British measures on material grounds and so increase the French influence and encourage it in a way very unpleasant for England,—the British Cabinet has given us a fresh opportunity by its treaty with the Congo Free State for making clear the disadvantage of annoying us. The excitement in Paris over the alleged injustice suffered there and the delight at our not being on England's side in this question is clearly expressed in the French Press. Supposing we were to demand in Brussels not only the removal of the corridor that has been conceded to the British in opposition to our interests, but that a conference should be summoned to consider the whole question, or else were to support a similar demand made by France, the British would have to consider seriously what the result would be, if France, knowing that she was relieved of anxiety in her rear, might stiffen her claims against England, speak out strongly in Egypt (where things at present are not going so smoothly for England), refuse to evacuate the still occupied provinces of Siam, as promised, or to form the buffer State, and be free to advance everywhere in Africa without considering British claims and interests.

This in my opinion is the way in which we can exert pressure on England and make her more amenable, assuming that we have time in front of us to wait for it to work gradually upon the British Cabinet. (The EMPEROR : ' *Excellent. This exactly expresses my views. We must arrange our policy, as recommended here, and in the way first suggested—Egypt.*')

CHAPTER XXI

EGYPT. APRIL, 1894–MARCH, 1895

[German policy during these years was concerned in supporting England in the Mediterranean against the possible schemes of France and Russia. This involved practically unqualified support of the British control of Egypt. The position in 1894–5 was very similar to that of 1882. (Cf. Vol. I, p. 155.)

The situation was slightly complicated by Baron von Heyking's (German representative in Egypt) resentment [1] at Lord Cromer's autocratic control of Egyptian policy, and in particular at his proposal to convert a further section of the Egyptian Debt to which there were a considerable number of German subscribers. In spite of Lord Kimberley's assurance that British investors were receiving no special consideration, the German Government was not entirely satisfied with the scheme. Nevertheless, a sharp warning was administered to Baron von Heyking not to make common cause in any way with Lord Cromer's opponents in Egypt.

The Khedive, Abbas II, also attempted to throw off the British control, but after the administration of a sharp lesson, he came into line in January, 1895, and desisted from standing in the way of his country's regeneration. (Cf. H. D. Traill, *Lord Cromer*, p. 281 et seq.)]

VIII. 215

Count Hatzfeldt to the Chancellor, Count von Caprivi, *April 17th*, 1894

Confidential.

At a chance meeting just after I had visited him in the Foreign Office, Lord Kimberley [2] expressed the wish to meet me again very soon.

On the next day I followed up his invitation, and the Minister, after touching on various points, soon came to speak of the recent events in Egypt and expressed satisfaction at the change of Ministry that had taken place there,[3] and at the attitude of the Khedive, who this time seemed to have acted correctly and in harmony with Lord Cromer.

Lord Kimberley then said that he wished to discuss with me in confidence more particularly a question closely connected with Egypt, in which we were also interested. This was the

[1] Cf. p. 301. [2] Foreign Secretary in Lord Rosebery's Cabinet.
[3] Nubar Pacha superseded Riaz Pacha.

Conversion of the Debt, proposed by the Egyptian Government. I probably knew that the French Government, though it had not yet made any official announcement, was showing little readiness to consent to the measure in question. He, Lord Kimberley, was not surprised at this, and had expected nothing else. Unfortunately, however, we also appeared little inclined to support the British Government in Egypt in this matter, and he had the painful impression that ' a shadow had fallen on our former friendly relations in Egyptian affairs '.

I replied to the Minister that I could only speak of the past as the present state of the question and my Government's views on it were so far unknown to me. This much I did know, and he would find it confirmed, if he would send for the documents, that for a number of years,—certainly ever since I first had the honour to represent the German Empire here,—we had never missed an opportunity of seconding the British Government in Egypt and of shaping our course according to its wishes. At the time when the Railway was discussed, the behaviour of the British Ambassador in Constantinople had caused an interruption in this, for he had exerted all his influence against us in that question, which was a very important one for German interests.[1] The difficulties occasioned by this attitude, which we could hardly recognise as a return for our friendliness in Egypt, were finally removed through the personal intervention of Lord Rosebery, who, as a result of my representations, took great pains to make good the damage done by Sir Clare Ford. My sole information so far on the Conversion question, lately raised in Egypt, came from the newspapers ; I did not know, therefore, whether the Imperial Government had yet taken up any position at all with regard to the question.

Lord Kimberley seemed unaware of the event in Constantinople which I had mentioned, and expressed regret at the misunderstanding which had arisen at the time. His comment was that mere complaints about what was past and done with got one no further on in politics, and that it would be more useful to concentrate on the future. In the present case he was unfortunately forced to conclude, from the news received from Cairo, that we had refused our consent to the Conversion. However desirable its success might be, this question was in his eyes of less importance in itself than the far more serious matter of remaining in agreement with us in Egypt. He set great store on this, and he would be very grateful if I would report to my Government in this sense and so help to restore the former harmony in Egyptian questions.

I confined myself to promising to bring his words to Your

[1] Cf. p. 180.

Excellency's knowledge, and I beg you to provide me with instructions as to what I am to say on the question put by Lord Kimberley. He will be sure to refer to it again soon.

I hope that I was acting in accordance with Your Excellency's intentions in at once reminding the Minister of the incident in Constantinople. I make no doubt that he well understood the allusion and has gathered from it that we attach importance to reciprocity of services, and consider it as a preliminary condition of any action on our part in regard to these matters.

[It should not be forgotten that German support against France for the policy of Great Britain in Egypt was not offered, until Great Britain had agreed not to place difficulties in the way of Bismarck's colonial schemes. Throughout the course of the Egyptian question Germany never failed to threaten withdrawal of her assistance at any sign of lack of compliance on Great Britain's part.]

I think that I should mention that the Prime Minister, whom I met a few days ago, on that occasion repeatedly assured me that Lord Kimberley shared and expressed his, the Prime Minister's, views on all questions, and that I might always place full confidence in his words and regard them as coming from himself.

VIII. 217

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *May 2nd*, 1894

As regards the special question of the Debt Conversion scheme, mentioned by Lord Kimberley, I remark as follows, for your information:

The Egyptian Government's intention to convert the 4 per cent Unified Debt only came to our knowledge by a note from the Egyptian Foreign Minister of March 15th, addressed to our representative in Cairo. The Conversion scheme touches the interests of our numerous holders of the Egyptian Bonds very closely. An examination of the scheme, so far as it was at first possible, showed but a very slight benefit for the Egyptian State finances, and a probability, moreover, that the sacrifices entailed by the Conversion on the Bond-holders would profit the Banks engaged in the transaction more than they would the Egyptian Financial administration. There has been no word either by the British representative here or to our representative in Cairo as to a *British* interest in the Conversion.

The only report that our Consul-General, on receiving the Egyptian Foreign Minister's note, could supply as to the British Government's position with regard to the Conversion, is as follows: 'I hear that the British Government has declared, in reply to an enquiry by Lord Cromer, its general agreement with the Conversion without much enthusiasm, but rather in deference

to the wishes of the British Financial Adviser here, as well as those of the large London Banks.' When Lord Kimberley not only complains of our failure to assist in this matter, but now also requires us to subject the interests of our Bond-holders, without a word, not to England's political interests, but to the consideration which the British Government thinks it must pay for some reason to the British financiers, who wish for the Conversion ; he is expecting us to guess the British wishes without the British Government's taking the trouble to inform us what they are. And thirdly, Lord Kimberley's recriminations point to his assumption that we have a moral obligation for all time to support all England's desires in Egypt.

As regards our attitude towards the Conversion question, I would remark that this has not at all been one of refusal. We have merely presented orally and confidentially the almost natural and justified request for an examination of the Caisse de la Dette, as has *always* been done hitherto, so as to judge of the usefulness of the measure. The answer to this oral and confidential enquiry of the Egyptian Government regarding the proposal, which emanated from Egypt alone, and was *in no way* supported by England, is a British recrimination in Cairo and London.

I beg you to lay these facts before Lord Kimberley at the first opportunity.

If the Minister returns, as he can hardly avoid doing, to the general question of our support for British interests in Egypt, please use the following argument in your conversation : We have hitherto supported England in Egypt without either demanding or receiving any return, but have never pledged ourselves to further support. England has therefore no right to reproach us about the attitude of our representative in Cairo, which depends on our free pleasure and is shaped in accordance with our interests alone. England's attitude of late years towards France in Egypt has scarcely been an inducement for us to support the British-inspired wishes of the Egyptian Government, when they are opposed by France as well.

Lord Kimberley's ' threat ' to come to an understanding with France over Egypt makes an impression on us, similar to that made, as I imagine, on Lord Kimberley by the French Secretary's announcement (as reported by Baron Heyking) that the French meant to come to an understanding with us about Alsace-Lorraine, in order to drive the British out of Egypt.

As a matter of fact, we might view the whole affair the other way round, namely, that we might help the French to drive the British out of Egypt, and that then the French would find themselves forced, if they were to hold their own in Egypt, to come to an understanding with us on their Eastern frontier.

Please make it clear to the British Minister that his ' threats ' will have no success with us.

VIII. 219

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI,

May 9th, 1894.

Extract.

I found an opportunity to-day to mention to Lord Kimberley your despatch of May 2nd on the subject of our attitude in Egypt. . . . The Minister listened to me with attention and remarked that the Conversion scheme had been communicated here exactly as in Paris and Berlin. It was not until after due examination that they were convinced in London that the Egyptian Finances would derive a real benefit from the measure. They then became interested in carrying it through, but were not placing themselves in the foreground, and they wished to submit to the other Powers a formal proposal with regard to it. Naturally Germany was not bound to support British wishes about Egypt either in the present case or generally. He, Lord Kimberley, had no desire whatever for our support in this case, if we thought it unprofitable, but he merely wished to learn our views and the reasons for them. He had said exactly the same to the French Ambassador, when he found that France was refusing her consent. He had merely requested M. Decrais to tell him the reasons, which determined his Government's attitude of refusal, and the French Ambassador had made a frank and clear statement.

Judging from Lord Kimberley's whole speech and attitude, I was left in no doubt that his effort is to soften his former statements to me on the question and make it appear that England is claiming no preferential treatment for herself and therefore cannot either offer or grant any return concessions to us in the Conversion matter.

As things are, if I am not mistaken, it may be to our interest simply to accept this point of view and adapt to it our policy in Egypt. In this and other similar matters, as they turn up, we should thus merely have to consider the attitude best suited to German interests and quietly observe whether England, if she sees that she will lose by it, is herself taking the right way to regain our former friendly support.

With this in mind I dropped the discussion after Lord Kimberley's detailed exposition, and, if Your Excellency gives me no further instructions, I shall not return to the question unless he suggests it himself.

VIII. 221

BARON VON ROTENHAN, IN BERLIN, TO BARON VON HEYKING, CONSUL-GENERAL IN CAIRO, *June 29th*, 1894

Extract.

In your report of June 17th you state that you have, in contradiction of Lord Cromer, advised the Khedive to give up his projected visit to Switzerland and to accept the Sultan's invitation to go at once to Constantinople, and that His Highness thanked you for your advice and promised to keep you informed in future on all important matters.

This intention of the Khedive's, for the fulfilment of which you will have to play two parts very difficult to combine—that of an Imperial Consul-General and an adviser to His Highness—springs from the wish to have something in reserve, when dealing with the British Government and its representatives in Egypt. By granting the Khedive's demand, you might incur the danger of joining the French representative in *permanent* opposition to the British one, and this would not suit our general policy. . . .

VIII. 222

BARON VON ROTENHAN TO BARON VON HEYKING, *July 5th*, 1894

At the end of your report of June 23rd you mentioned that the events before the Khedive's journey to Constantinople contributed towards bringing up the question whether there is to be an open British protectorate over Egypt, or whether the British influence is retreating before the growing authority of the Khedive.

This aspect of the question does not interest us. We are satisfied with the present situation, which is driving Egypt as a wedge between England and France. This is better than a protectorate, for if the Powers chiefly interested recognised the British occupation, it would make England more independent of us than she is now. It is a question whether our Congo negotiations with England would have ended so well or so quickly, if England had not wished to avoid the prospect of an African conference ' with an extended programme '.

There are situations arising from the Anglo-French differences, in which it is to our advantage to hold the decision in our hands. Speaking generally it will be enough that by passive silence rather than positive utterances we convince England that she can expect no obligatory services (*Frondienste*) from Germany in Egypt or anywhere else. On the other hand, we cannot (except under acute provocation, as in the case of the Congo incident) decently set ourselves in open and permanent antagonism to England, for this would be neither in consonance with the traditional close relationship between the two nations, nor with the

feelings of our associates in the Triple Alliance. (The EMPEROR : '*Good.*')

VIII. 223

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI,
July 4th, 1894

Very confidential.

I waited on the Foreign Minister to-day, it being his usual reception day, and he took the opportunity to discuss, as he expressly said, personally and very confidentially, a subject which had greatly disturbed him and his colleagues. This was the attitude lately adopted by our Consul-General in Egypt, which pointed to an anti-British leaning, quite unexpected here. (The EMPEROR : '*!*') It was filling Lord Cromer, no less than the British Cabinet, with anxiety on account of the influence it might exercise politically on the Khedive and elsewhere.

At the first he, the Minister, had asked Sir Edward Malet for his opinion in confidence and was told in reply that Sir Edward could the less explain our Cairo representative's anti-British attitude, since he was formerly known for his pro-British sympathies. (The EMPEROR : '*Correct.*')

Lord Kimberley sent for Lord Cromer's most recent correspondence and read me in strict confidence parts of three long private letters, in which Lord Cromer mentioned his German colleague's Anglophobia and the regrettable influence that he had exercised on the Khedive's travel plans, and finally called attention to the effect that an open rapprochement of our representative with his French and Russian colleagues might have on British interests in Egypt.

I replied that I knew but little about recent events in Egypt and could naturally only express my personal views on the subject. If our Cairo representative had really interfered with the Khedive's plans for his journey, or had offered him any advice likely to influence him against England politically, I thought I could assume with certainty that this corresponded neither with the Imperial Government's intentions, nor with the instructions it had issued. My impression was that the differences between Lord Cromer and our representative were much more personal than political in nature, and I did not think that Baron Heyking should be made to bear the whole responsibility, or that they should lay him open to the accusation of 'Anglophobia'. From all that I knew of Lord Cromer, the dictatorial position which he had for years occupied in Egypt had perhaps accustomed him rather too much to regard his desires as final on all matters of business, and to look upon anyone who happened to express a

dissentient opinion as an adversary. Possibly Baron Heyking might have disagreed with the British representative on the Quarantine question, as Lord Cromer indeed mentioned in his letters. This might well happen in questions of the sort, in which every Power possessed concrete interests. If Lord Cromer inferred a basic antagonism from this and at the same time betrayed his feelings, I could well imagine that this was not the best way to instil compliance into our representative, but on the contrary it would only determine him to hold to the purely independent opinion he had formed on the bare facts of the case. (The EMPEROR: '*Correct.*')

Lord Kimberley did not at all deny this. He added very confidentially that Lord Cromer, whose otherwise great qualities he fully admitted, was apt to be rather abrupt, when greater personal amiability might much more easily have avoided or removed the obstacle.

The Minister also thanked me heartily for my words. He added the request to make no use whatever in Berlin of his very confidential statements on the subject. He wished to discuss it with Lord Cromer, who was expected here shortly, and hoped so to produce an improvement in the relations between him and his German colleague.

Lord Cromer's private letters, mentioned above, and the Minister's words to-day are a clear proof of the anxiety lest the alleged rapprochement of our representative in Egypt with his French and Russian colleagues may have been the result of instructions from Berlin (The EMPEROR: '*I*'), and lest the Khedive's attitude may be actually influenced by it. I confined myself to the statement reported above, without going any deeper into it. I especially avoided suggesting any possibility of an engagement on our part, which might raise hopes here of our support in all questions arising in Egypt. Even though it may perhaps be advisable in given circumstances and in individual cases not to refuse our support, it may in my humble opinion be to our interest not to allow the fear, which is evidently present here, that we may change if they give us reason to do so, to die out entirely. (The EMPEROR: '*This fear started with my threat* [1] *to refuse to assist England in Egypt, if the Congo dispute were not settled.*')

Minute by CAPRIVI.

Our answer is that with us there is no question of Anglophobia, that we are ready now also to be on the side of the British Government, but we neither can nor will put up with every sign of ill-humour from Lord Cromer. I wish to see the reply.

[1] Cf. p. 316.

VIII. 226

BARON VON ROTENHAN, IN BERLIN, TO BARON VON HEYKING, *July 9th*, 1894

The representatives of the British Government in London, Constantinople and here have given out the fact that the Khedive's journey to Constantinople was the result of advice offered by you. We have replied in London that, if you did give this advice, it was that you acted under the impression of the general situation created between us and England by the Congo dispute, but without special instructions to do so.

Moreover, the Khedive and Mukdar Pacha have spoken of your arrival in Egypt, as if it signified a change in our Egyptian policy.

Egypt represents, no more than Bulgaria, an end in itself for us politically, but merely a means for regulating our relations towards other European Powers in a way best suited to our interests. Looked at from this standpoint, therefore, the question whether in the disputes between the Khedive and Lord Cromer the one or the other is in the right is a side-issue. But even if it were not so, we could take as little serious notice of the statements, which the Khedive is now making in Constantinople about the national feelings and pride of the fellaheen, as of his criticism of the Egyptian troops trained by British officers, a criticism, which is directly the opposite of Marshal Mukdar Pacha's views.

German Note.

At a review in January, 1894, the Khedive made a demonstration, criticising the troops commanded by British officers. A peremptory demand from England forced him to take back his abusive language and apologise to the officers and troops.

Moreover, the complaints uttered by the Khedive and others of Lord Cromer's brusqueness would act in our favour, as they would make the position of the British more difficult and increase their need therefore of looking for German support.

It would be a political error for us to start by depriving the British Government of its *hope* of securing this support at the psychological moment. You must therefore be most careful to avoid everything, which can lay us open to the charge of a *parti pris* against England, as for instance, any exclusive social intimacy with anti-British circles—Turkish, Egyptian or French.

It will also be well for you to say casually that in cases where your genuine conviction does not stand in the way, you will gladly support the British representative as before. In the present case your independent attitude has not been displeasing to us, as it shows that we also do not intend to follow in the wake of the

British in Egypt. (The EMPEROR: '*Yes.*') Before taking part in questions, political or with political results, it will usually be to your own interest first to enquire here, as the consequences of such action on the general political situation cannot be appreciated with certainty in Cairo.

In connection with the above, I should inform you that when he was here recently, Baron von Richthofen [1] was warned to report here through you in good time the cases which come into his sphere, and in which Germany can, without injuring the cause, pay more or less attention to British wishes. (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*')

German Note.

In a despatch to Baron von Heyking (July 24th) Baron von Rotenhan gave the reasons in detail why consent to the Conversion scheme was not desirable from the German point of view. The main objections were purely material ones, and it was not until the close that political considerations were touched upon in the following words:

'I consider it an essential condition that England cannot fairly claim our support in Egypt, if, as is the case here, we have material interests to oppose to hers. I think it especially important to convince the British Government that in the present case *political* considerations are not affecting our decision, and I beg you earnestly to put this before the British representative on every occasion that offers.'

Count Hatzfeldt was instructed in the same sense on July 31st. On August 3rd he reported that Lord Kimberley had raised no objections to the German attitude with regard to the Conversion scheme, and was in fact pleased on receiving the assurance that in this case the German Government's views were not at all affected by political considerations.

VIII. 228

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *August 23rd*, 1894

Cipher telegram. Secret.

In strict confidence and clearly acting under Lord Rosebery's express instructions, Lord Kimberley invited me to see him and informed me that a fortnight earlier the Sultan had proposed to Sir Philip Currie [2] the resumption of negotiations on the subject of Egypt. As the Sultan now seems to be seeking a rapprochement with England, which would greatly benefit her in Egypt, a friendly reply has been returned to him, couched in vague terms.

. . .

[1] German Commissioner for the Caisse de la Dette Publique.

[2] Ambassador in Constantinople from August, 1894, in succession to Sir Clare Ford.

VIII. 229

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *August 24th*, 1894

Cipher. Secret.

The Prime Minister, who spoke frankly and in strict confidence to me on the subject, does not share Lord Kimberley's view that England is not essentially interested in the possession of Egypt, or that in the event of evacuation she would be strong enough in the Mediterranean against the combined fleets of two Powers, to prevent another Power from taking Egypt. At the same time he referred to the internal situation in Italy and the inclination there to stand well with France, and expressed strong doubts as to whether England could really count on the Italian fleet's co-operation.

Lord Rosebery is still very much divided in mind whether to consider the Sultan's proposal. Quite apart from the anxiety, which he shares, lest the French dislike of England might be seriously increased by it, he fears

(1) that the Sultan, as once before, might fail to ratify an agreement, after it had been concluded,

(2) that any too exact stipulation respecting an eventual evacuation would encourage the elements in Egypt itself, which were hostile to the British occupation, and make the latter even harder than it was.

According to Lord Rosebery, the Sultan now adopts the old formula which was proposed here,—that after five years a British and Turkish delegate shall agree as to the time and method of evacuation. Lord Rosebery remarked that England intended actually to retain complete freedom regarding evacuation, but that a stipulation about it would certainly be regarded in Egypt as a definite admission and sign of weakness on England's part, and might be used against her.

My impression from it all is that Lord Rosebery is really hesitating and might be amenable to advice offered by myself in one direction or another. However, I repeatedly told him in a friendly tone that I could offer neither advice nor opinions on the subject, and that I had said the same to Lord Kimberley.

The Prime Minister ended by requesting strict secrecy, to which I agreed.

VIII. 230–1

COUNT VON METTERNICH, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *October 8th*, 1894

In reference to the secret report of August 24th.

Lord Kimberley recently mentioned the relations now existing

between this Government and the Sultan, and between the Sultan and the Khedive. He said that since his visit to Constantinople the latter has shown much exasperation against his Liege-lord.

Egypt seemed quiet just now, and Nubar Pacha's position, which had been shaky, appeared to be re-establishing itself.

Moreover the Sultan's wishes regarding Egypt had retired into the background again.

Rustem Pacha confirmed this to me and added that the Sultan's main source of annoyance was now, not England's position in Egypt, but Italy's irresponsible action in the Sudan. The illegal seizure of Kassala by the Italians, which belonged to the Turkish Empire, could not be accepted quietly by the Sultan. He, Rustem Pacha, did not believe the rumour of a projected advance on Khartoum by the British and Italians. On the contrary, the Italian Government was trying to persuade the British to retire from Zeyla, so that Italian troops could be sent there. He hoped that the British Government would not accept this suggestion. If England gave up Zeyla, the Sultan alone might rule there.

VIII. 231

BARON VON HEYKING, IN CAIRO, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *February 25th*, 1895

I have to report to Your Highness that I am convinced that the situation in Egypt is about to come to a head, and that, unless the European Powers intervene, it is within the range of possibility that the Khedive may be deposed.

The British Officials in Egypt have gradually acquired the belief, which they openly express, that in the long run it is impossible to govern with a Khedive who is hostile to the British control. The Khedive has done nothing very much directly against the British since last summer. All the cases cited by the British in this respect are unimportant matters, which appear to be exhumed with a purpose. Thus, the Khedive was so thoughtless as to speak of the British at a luncheon with his personal friends in contemptuous and insulting terms,[1] which were at once repeated to them. Again, he has too often received Takla Bey, the editor of certain Arabic papers which stir up opposition against the British, and the language of these papers, which is said to be excessively violent, is held to be connected with this. Finally he expressed before Sir Edwin Palmer, the Financial Adviser, his displeasure at the Egyptian Ministers, especially Nubar Pacha, because they trimmed their sails to the wind and steered according to the wishes of the British. However, when Lord Cromer came

[1] Cf. H. D. Traill, *Lord Cromer*, p. 303.

to the Khedive and asked him if he desired another change of Ministry so soon, the Khedive took fright and denied it. For the rest, during the last months the Khedive, as I have already reported, has been interfering less in state business, as he is quite taken up with his own family affairs. All the same, it must be admitted that there is a wide-spread conviction amongst the native population, at least so far as it is influenced by the newspapers, that the Khedive is hostile to the British. The latter have, therefore, some grounds for regarding the Khedive as the centre of opposition, which is universally directed against them by educated Egyptians.

Even Lord Cromer, the only one of the Englishmen in an official position here, whose vision covers the whole of Egyptian policy, does not seem to me yet quite clearly determined to strike a decisive blow at the Khedive. But he is nervous and irritable and generally tired of the whole affair ; also he is worried by the serious illness of his wife, and is being urged to act against the Khedive by the British officials in Egypt, of whom he is the sole controller. Mr. Chirol, the *Times* Correspondent, who is staying here, is strongly urging a forward policy on Lord Cromer. Mr. Chirol has undoubtedly to his credit the fact of having, by his correspondence and articles, convinced the British public that Egypt must not be evacuated. He is now pressing still further for the complete absorption of Egypt in a way which, if I am not mistaken, may perhaps no longer suit our interests. His alarmist telegrams to the *Times* on the alleged fanatical temper of the population here, which the French Press treats as a direct attack on the Khedive, have contributed greatly to upset people's minds and have caused it to be supposed that England is preparing a crushing blow at the Khedive.

It is perhaps temporarily more peaceful here. The unnatural situation, however, remains the same, and the chasm between the power actually wielded by the English here, and the position, which they claim officially, is so unbridgeable, that disputes are bound to recur soon, until one of the two conflicting elements is cleared out of the way.

VIII. 233

THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, TO BARON VON HEYKING, IN CAIRO, *March 4th*, 1895

Telegram.

I assume that you have given no further expression to the pro-Khedive attitude which is observable in your report of February 25th. Germany has as little inducement to-day as in 1882 to break with any European Power for the benefit of the

Viceroy and his Pachas.[1] You will do well to study for your own guidance the instructions forwarded in that year to Baron Saurma, in so far as these recognise in practice the principles of the treaties and above all express the German attitude. I call your attention in particular to Prince Bismarck's telegram *en clair* of July 7th, 1882, to the Imperial Consul-General, the aim of which, according to the authentic explanation in our records, was to remove the effects of the short-sighted attitude of the Imperial representative, which had displeased the Chancellor.

German Note.

On the occasion of Admiral Seymour's threat (carried shortly afterwards into effect) to proceed to the bombardment of Alexandria, Baron von Saurma had permitted himself to telegraph on July 4th, 1882, that it seemed urgently advisable to warn the rash Admiral to keep quiet. Saurma was at once informed by telegram on July 7th that Admiral Seymour's action was the result of instructions from his Government, which the latter had communicated, moreover, in Berlin. A further telegram (July 8th) informed Saurma that we were not called upon to exercise via London directly or indirectly an influence on the British Admiral's actions. Then on the 9th followed a stern order to confine himself to waiting and to avoid in particular all words and actions, which might appear to be a criticism of or opposition to England or any other Power. At the same time a report by Count Münster, Ambassador in London, was minuted by Prince Bismarck on July 9th as follows: 'We must not even look askance at what the British are doing, but must calmly let everything happen.' The inner reason for Bismarck's *abstention bienveillante* appears in another marginal note by him to a despatch of Prince Reuss's (July 6th): 'We must bear in mind the possibility of being on a friendly footing with England, as soon as there is a politically approachable Government there again.' Thus the motives underlying German policy in 1882 and 1895 were identical in character.[2]

VIII. 234

Baron von Heyking, in Cairo, to the German Foreign Office, *March 5th*, 1895

Cipher telegram.

I accept Your Highness' instructions as an exact guide, and I beg to report that I have always hitherto refrained from expressing any opinions and merely sought to supply Your Highness with the most reliable information possible.

[1] Vol. I, p. 155 et seq.
[2] Cf. Lord Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, I, 280 et seq.

CHAPTER XXII

THE CONGO DISPUTE. THE GERMAN-ITALIAN EFFORT TO DETACH ENGLAND FROM FRANCE. MAY, 1894, TO AUGUST, 1895

[The Liberal Government's policy of keeping friendly with France, as well as with the Triple Alliance, was a constant problem for German diplomacy. The necessity of keeping France from dominating the Mediterranean made it essential to direct Italy's aspirations towards that Sea and the North coast of Africa. If England ceased to oppose France, Italy would be obliged to turn her back on North Africa and leave the Mediterranean to France and perhaps Russia. The German Foreign Office regarded Lord Rosebery's Government as useless for its purpose and found no alternative but to encourage Italy to wait for the return of Lord Salisbury to power.]

German Note.

In a report dated March 27th, 1894, Bernhard von Bülow (the German Ambassador in Rome) stated that Baron Blanc had shown him a private letter written by Count Tornielli, the Italian Ambassador in London. In it Tornielli warned his Chief ' not to be too intimately in touch with Great Britain, as this would arouse Germany's jealousy. In reality Germany desired neither a close relationship between England and Italy, nor to see the naval power of these two States increased beyond a certain margin. Germany did not wish England and Italy to become factors with which Germany would have to reckon seriously.'

VIII. 128

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, TO BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, *April 1st*, 1894

Your account of what Count Tornielli describes as the leading motives in German-British-Italian policy has been read by me with equal interest and astonishment. But I gather from it with satisfaction that no refutation is expected from our side.

In fact, a study of the Archives in the Italian Foreign Office should make it clear to the Minister that our wish to see England and Italy at one in realising in the most energetic manner their many joint interests, only depends on one assumption, namely, that their union is no *negotium claudicans*, in which Italy is bound and England free. From this point of view, when the Tuat question first arose, we advised the Italian Government to agree step

by step with England in the diplomatic action that was planned against France, and never to go further than this.[1] At that time both Cabinets stood loyally by each other. Lord Salisbury especially showed a readiness, quite unusual in an English Party Leader, for joint diplomatic action in Paris in an anti-French sense. It is entirely the fault of the third participant, Spain, that the Anglo-Italian measures for maintaining the *status quo* in Morocco led at that time to no solid result.

Count Tornielli's unfavourable opinion of Lord Salisbury is reciprocated. The Imperial Government has more than once, in the course of years, been in a position to realise the difficulties that the British Minister's irremovable mistrust of Count Tornielli has caused in diplomatic business.

[In framing the Zanzibar-Heligoland Treaty of 1890, Germany insisted on preserving direct frontier connection between her own East African possessions and the Congo State, thus making an All-British Cape to Cairo line an impossibility.[2] To obviate this restriction, the British Government agreed in 1894 with King Leopold of Belgium to exchange leases of certain districts in their respective spheres. This, if carried into execution, would have enabled England to establish complete communication between North and South, and the main German aim would have been defeated. Germany was, however, able to point to a treaty concluded between herself and Belgium ten years earlier. Moreover, a convention between France and the Congo State stood in the way. Thus the plan for linking North and South had to be abandoned.]

German Note.

There had been long-standing difficulties between France and the Congo Free State regarding the frontier line on the River Ubangi, and on April 16th representatives, including Hanotaux, director of the Trade Department of the French Foreign Office, and Count de la Grelle, Foreign Minister of the Congo Free State, met at Brussels for a business discussion, but they separated without result on the 24th.

VIII. 427

Count von Alvensleben, Minister in Brussels, to the Chancellor, Count von Caprivi, *May 1st*, 1894

Confidential.

Since the negotiations here between the delegates of the Congo State and France were broken off, the attitude of the French Press has caused some anxiety in Government circles in Belgium. M. Hanotaux's speech at the Conference is approved of by the *Temps* in its articles. . . . The threats contained in them make the Belgians assume that an unpleasant surprise is to be expected from France.

Under these circumstances it is probable that the Congo State

[1] Cf. p. 142. [2] Cf. Chap. II.

Government will consider how to parry some blow from France by anticipating it, and indications from a reliable source give me cause to suspect that something will happen very soon, which they think here will be very unwelcome to France. I was not able to obtain a definition of these indications, so that I can only guess, and I think that what may happen is the following :

First, the hastening of the annexation of the Congo Free State by Belgium, for which, apart from the constitutional objections, there would not be time during the present Session of the Chamber. Moreover, it is very doubtful whether the present temper of the country would particularly favour it.

Secondly, another possibility,—an understanding with the British Government regarding the territory in the North-east, West of Lake Albert and the Upper Nile ; this is more probable and would certainly be more unwelcome to France. The impending debate on the Uganda question in the British House of Commons might provide a suitable opportunity for throwing light on such an understanding.

German Note.

The Article of the Agreement (of May 12, 1894, between Great Britain and the Independent Congo State) which specially interests Germany, is Article III, as follows :—

The Independent Congo State grants under lease to Great Britain to be administered, when occupied, under the conditions and for the period hereafter determined, a strip of territory 25 kilom. in breadth, extending from the most northerly port on Lake Tanganyika, which is included in it, to the most southerly point of Lake Albert Edward. This lease will have similar duration to that which applies to the territories to the west of the 30th meridian east of Greenwich. (British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. 86, 1893–4.)

VIII. 428

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *May 10th*, 1894

Extract.

. . . As England leaves the country on the Upper Nile to Belgium, it is clear that her object is to make it a buffer against the French schemes of expansion. A contributing factor may also be Germany's refusal to play this part, in virtue of the treaty for determining the frontier of the Cameroons.

It may also be questioned whether the Congo State, which is recognised as a neutral State within determined frontiers, can be regarded as justified in extending its frontiers at will. France would certainly question this right, and it is a matter for consideration whether Germany's interest lies in strengthening the Congo State's position, if it is to serve as a buffer between France and England.

VIII. 430

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT VON ALVENSLEBEN, IN BRUSSELS, *May 27th*, 1894

Telegram.

By Article III of the Agreement, the Congo State intended to admit an alteration in the treaty concluded with us on November 8th, 1884.[1] It is Germany's right that this shall not take place without her consent, or at any rate, not if her interests are to suffer by it. The other party to our treaty is the Congo State, from whom we must demand the fulfilment of its international engagements. It is its business to settle with England.

You will press these points and, in view of the unfavourable reception this decision has met with by our public opinion, sustain our demand insisting on an immediate declaration in writing. You are empowered to explain to His Majesty,[2] if necessary, that if the Congo State infringes its neutrality by assisting the British policy of aggression in Africa, Germany has no interest in the Congo State's existence and would prefer the French as neighbours.

VIII. 433

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *May 31st*, 1894

You are already informed of our attitude towards the Agreement concluded between England and the Congo Free State on May 12th. We see injury to our interests especially in Article III of the treaty, which contemplates handing over a strip of country between Lake Tanganyika and Albert Edward Nyanza. This would mean the risk of our German-East African Protectorate being hemmed in on all sides by British territory. We must conclude from the unfriendly attitude adopted by the British Government towards our colonial aspirations, that the neighbourhood of the British on our borders in the district in question, would lead to undesirable friction and tend to draw trade away from our possessions in that zone. We must therefore be careful to maintain the frontier line with the Congo State as it is, and for this reason we have taken the steps you know of with the Congo State Government, which, moreover, formerly disclaimed to us any intention of making any such cession of territory.

The Imperial Minister in Brussels has reported on the impression made in the Brussels Press by the publication of the treaty. A copy of his report of May 25th has been sent to you. Count von Alvensleben's last telegraphic reports lead us to expect that the Congo State will conform to our wishes.

[1] Recognising the position of the Free State. [2] King Leopold.

VIII. 440

COUNT MÜNSTER, IN PARIS, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *June 7th*, 1894

Telegram.

The Foreign Minister declared in answer to a question in the Chamber, that the Agreement between England and the Congo State was contrary to the International Law for Africa, and that the French Government regarded it as 'nul et sans portée'. The Chamber passed the following Resolution unanimously: 'La Chambre, confiant dans les déclarations du Gouvernement et convaincue que s'appuyant sur le droit international il saura faire respecter les droits de la France, passe à l'ordre du jour.'

German Note.

In a note, dated June 5th, 1894, Lord Kimberley acknowledged :—

(1) that the boundary between Germany and the Congo State cannot be altered without the assent of Germany; and

(2) that the stipulation of the Convention between Germany and the Congo State will remain in force and apply to that strip, after it has been handed over to Great Britain.

VIII. 443

DRAFT OF A REPLY TO LORD KIMBERLEY'S NOTE. *Extract.*

Forwarded on June 10th to Count Hatzfeldt.

. . . An alteration of the frontier between German East Africa and the Congo State is intended by the Contracting Parties under Art. III of the treaty of May 12th, concluded between Great Britain and the Congo State. The handing over of a strip of territory, described therein as a 'lease', is in effect a complete cession, as its period is left indefinite, and its full extent cannot be calculated. This would be an injury to the rights of the German Empire, whose assent to the treaty would be as necessary as if the handing over of the strip were followed by absolute cession. . . .

In the negotiations which led to the Anglo-German Agreement of July 1st, 1890, Germany rejected Great Britain's expressed desire for a similar strip, because it would have impaired our political position and interrupted our direct trade connection with the Congo State. This unfavourable position for Germany will result in any case, irrespective of whether the strip handed to Great Britain was touching the German border immediately or lay several kilometres away from it. Art. III of the Agreement aforesaid is an attempt to place Germany at a disadvantage and realise the object which was not attained in 1890.

These are the grounds on which the Imperial Government protests against the Agreement of May 12th. It will not recognise

it, until her outraged rights and interests have received full satisfaction.

Minute by CAPRIVI (June 8th).

I should like the note in a somewhat more polite form and have marked a few places to be toned down.

I think it questionable to mention interruption of our trade relations in the Congo State. The reply might be that the Congo Agreement guarantees us freedom of trade, even supposing England becomes possessed of that strip.

The matter is so important, that I think it advisable to obtain His Majesty's consent, before the note is despatched.

[Sir Edward Grey's reply to a Question on June 8th, 1894.

'Germany has not made any general protest against the Anglo-Belgian Agreement. The German Ambassador has communicated to us the correspondence with the authorities of the Congo Free State, in which the German Government asked for assurances that the lease of the road to Tanganyika should not interfere with the existing frontier, and should not affect the commercial and other rights secured to Germany and the Congo Free State by the Convention of 1884. On both points complete and unqualified assurances were made both here and at Brussels. There will be no objection to laying this correspondence, if Germany and the Congo State assent.' (Hansard, June 8th, 1894, Column 693.)]

VIII. 449

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *June 12th*, 1894

Cipher telegram. Extract.

My impression from the whole situation and from Sir Edward Grey's speech is that they will now try here to come to an understanding with France on African questions, if France will only consent to leave Egypt out of the affair and so *isolate us*. Your Excellency can best judge whether it can be safely assumed that the French Government will resist this attempt, if she thinks she cannot count on our co-operation in the present question. If this is not so, as I fear, it might be advisable to make it clear in Paris that, if France insists on calling a Congress, we shall agree and not stand in the way of Egypt's being included in it. I might respectfully suggest also that the moment has perhaps come to remind the Congo Government in a friendly, but decided tone, that we cannot stand the state of menace to our interests much longer, and that it may have to consent to a complete alteration of our relations—the treaty one as well with the Congo State—and probably also those of other friendly Powers if it does not soon and decisively withdraw the part of its treaty with England, to which we take exception.

It might make some impression here, if we received coolly an

attempt by England to reach an understanding with us as to the attitude in Morocco, and I would add that we can take no initiative in this question, which is of little interest to us, and that we wish to remain in agreement with all the Powers that have interests there.[1]

I will add that yesterday Lord Kimberley expressed the intention of publishing our notes. . . . I replied that I should do the same. (The EMPEROR: '*Agreed.*')

VIII. 450

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON MARSCHALL, *June 13th*, 1894

To-day I told the French Ambassador that he ought to know that recently in the House of Commons Sir Edward Grey declared that England and the Congo State had replied to the German protest against the Agreement of May 12th in a manner entirely satisfactory to Germany. The British Ambassador had also himself informed me yesterday that Lord Dufferin had made a similar statement to the French Foreign Minister about the state of the Anglo-German dispute. In London, however, they seemed to wish us to believe that the unsettled questions between England and France were going very well. These tactics were transparent. France was to be played off against Germany, and Germany against France, so as to arouse mutual suspicion and prevent joint action. Finally they hoped to placate one side with larger or smaller concessions and to isolate the other. The question was—should these tactics not be countered? French and German interests were not identical in matters of detail. We could not encourage France to get excited over the strip of land between Tanganyika and Albert Edward Nyanza, and we had no interest in the question of who administered the Bar-el-Ghazal. But the Agreement of May 12th was a matter of principle and impinged on the basis underlying International Law in Central Africa. Thus far the interests of Germany, France and even of other European States coincided. The fact that the Congo State, which claimed international recognition of its neutrality under Art. X of the Congo Agreement, was granting one State privileges and rights at the expense of other States, formed a precedent, affecting all the points in the present dispute. The Congo State Government had not yet returned us a regular answer, probably because they were waiting for guidance from London. If complications ensued, the Congo State would expect military support from England, being too weak by itself. Thus a condition would arise, which was contrary to the intentions of the parties to the Congo Act.

[1] Cf. p. 272.

The above made it necessary to consider whether it would not be advisable for France and Germany to take as their basis for negotiation with England—without binding themselves as to the details—the maintenance of the *status quo* regarding the legal position created by the Congo Act. The papers had mentioned a conference of the Powers which signed the Congo Treaty; I did not know what the French Government thought of it—a very wide programme would probably have to be dealt with by such a conference. But if only France and Germany definitely agreed in the direction mentioned above and acted accordingly, their influence would not go for nothing in London.

M. Herbette was keenly interested by my discourse and promised to report it to Paris. He complained bitterly of the British policy in Egypt. France did not want to have Egypt or to revive the Condominium or to upset anything; but as time went on, England's occupation of Egypt was becoming unbearable. Still less could France allow England to dispose of parts of the Sudan, which belonged to Egypt.

VIII. 454

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *June 15th*, 1894

Telegram.

Withdrawal of the Agreement of May 12th, and that without delay, is the only way to avoid complicating the European situation. England will learn that she cannot treat us as she chooses [1] and it will give her reason to prefer our friendship to our ill-will. We continue to press King Leopold to withdraw from the treaty. If this fails because he is hoping that England will support him, we must refuse to be responsible if the Egyptian question is raised, and if a Conference includes it in its programme.

Compensation will not remove the difficulties for us; what England would have to sacrifice would be very considerable.

You can inform whomever you think suitable, that you have personal reasons for fearing that, unless the treaty is withdrawn at once, the Egyptian question will begin to move again.

VIII. 458

COUNT VON ALVENSLEBEN, IN BRUSSELS, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *June 16th*, 1894

Cipher telegram.

Count de Grelle informed me very confidentially and without the King's previous knowledge, that His Majesty would immediately negotiate with the British Government to cancel Art. III of the treaty and thus offer complete satisfaction to Germany.

[1] Cf. p. 302.

He wished to know whether, if England agreed, our protest against the treaty would cease.

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON MARSCHALL, *June 16th*, 1894

The British Ambassador called upon me to-day and informed me as follows:

A few days since, the Queen had written to him about the Congo question and mentioned her anxiety at the turn affairs had taken. She thought that Germany was treating England in an 'unfriendly' fashion and asked him whether he did not consider it advisable for her to write to the Emperor on the subject. Sir Edward Malet had replied, urging the Queen strongly against this step and against taking a hand in the affair; whereupon the Queen had written again, requesting him to suggest some way out of this painful situation.

To the question as to what would satisfy us, I replied that the safest way out would be for the British Government to release the King of the Belgians from his word and to cancel the whole treaty. When he signed the treaty, King Leopold had certainly not foreseen that it would give rise to European complications, which might react on his own position in Belgium. In this form the cancellation would not in any way wound the natural pride of England or her Government. Sir Edward took this suggestion *ad referendum* and asked me—saying that he was not specially instructed to do so—whether we should be satisfied if England renounced the strip of land, i.e., Art. III of the Treaty. I replied that this clause certainly represented our most important legal point, but the question of principle still remained, and I was not able at present to answer the question decisively.

VIII. 459

COUNT ZU EULENBURG, IN VIENNA, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *June 17th*, 1894

Cipher telegram. Extract.

Count Deym has telegraphed to Count Kalnoky that Lord Rosebery invited him to visit him and said that he, Lord Rosebery, had come to see 'that the strip 25 kilometres in African territory, which was partly desert, was not important enough to England to cause a complete change in her policy. A further careful study of the German note[1] had also convinced him that it was somewhat less offensive than he had thought at first. . . .'

[1] Cf. p. 313.

VIII. 461.

[On July 17th, 1894, M. Herbette, French Ambassador in Berlin, addressed a note to Baron von Marschall containing the following sentences :]

En accord avec la proposition qui nous a été faite par la Chancellerie Impériale le 13 de ce mois (not given), nous sommes prêts ' à affirmer la communauté de vues des deux Gouvernements sur la nécessité de sauvegarder le statu quo légal africain, tel qu'il résulte des actes internationaux. . . .'

Notre programme vis-à-vis de l'Angleterre comme de l'Etat du Congo est de sauvegarder les droits en conciliant les intérêts et en ménageant les amours-propres.

Or, Lord Kimberley a déclaré à notre Ambassadeur à Londres (et une déclaration dans ce sens a été faite également au Parlement Britannique) que le Gouvernement de la Reine ne se proposait nullement d'établir la domination Anglaise du Cap à Alexandrie. ' C'est une politique ', a-t-il dit, ' qu'il faut reléguer parmi les chimères absurdes.'

Si l'Angleterre veut accepter sincèrement cette base de négociation, le recours à une Conférence ne serait pas, pour le moment, indispensable. . . .

Comment by Baron von Marschall.

' My impression is that the French Government intends, by enlarging the original suggestion, to let the matter sink away into the sand, so as to be able later to refuse joint action.'

VIII. 463

Bernhard von Bülow, in Rome, to the German Foreign Office, *June 17th*, 1894

To-day I discussed the situation caused by the British aggressions in Africa with Signor Crispi. He said that he deplored the differences between us and Great Britain, and that from the point of view of maintaining the balance of power in the Mediterranean, co-operation between the Triple Alliance and England was a matter of life and death to Italy.

I made thorough use orally with the Minister of the material that has been sent to me, showing that the blame for those differences rests entirely on England. I added that if the Italian Government wished the former good relations to be restored, it should make it clear to England that it would never support an aggressive anti-German policy in Africa, and should also make it its business to urge Lord Rosebery and Lord Kimberley to restore our outraged rights.

Signor Crispi promised to use his influence with the British Ministers in this sense and to recommend to them a reasonable and just attitude towards us. Later in our conversation the Prime Minister of his own accord said that Lord Rosebery had less political insight than his predecessor, Lord Salisbury.

VIII. 130

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *June 18th*, 1894

Baron Blanc allowed me in strict confidence to look at a telegram from Count Tornielli [1] which came in to-day. It is as follows :

' L'Angleterre semble vouloir s'arranger avec l'Allemagne dans l'affaire du Congo, et cela pour deux raisons : (1) le jeu ne veut pas la chandelle, et (2) parcequ'elle désire tirer d'embarras le Roi Léopold vis-à-vis de l'Allemagne. L'arrangement avec l'Allemagne, même s'il met fin à toute mésintelligence, ce qui est douteux, ne sera qu'un point de départ pour les accords qu'on désire plus que jamais à Londres établir avec la France, et nos intérêts n'en seront que plus menacés.'

Baron Blanc added that Count Tornielli's reports did not cease prophesying a persistent trend of British policy in the direction of France, which, he asserts, is the desire of many sections in England. Lord Kimberley was for an entente with France. Lord Rosebery was still resisting this, but would in the end give way, in order to win over to himself the Francophil Radicals, who now oppose him.

I told Baron Blanc that the present British Cabinet would find it much harder to reach an understanding with France than with Germany. It was doubtful if this Cabinet would be much longer in power. He ought not to allow himself to be led astray by the tendentious reports of Count Tornielli, who was opposed to the Triple Alliance.

VIII. 465

MEMORANDA BY BARON VON MARSCHALL, *June 18th*, 1894

1. The British Ambassador informed me to-day that Lord Kimberley greatly deplored that the Anglo-Congolese Agreement of May 12th had given rise to the belief in Germany that England cherished an unfriendly intention in the question, or had planned to deceive Germany. There never was such an intention. If Art. III contained a decision, which Germany had rejected in the negotiations of 1890, it should be remembered that those negotiations were conducted orally, and that there was nothing about them in the Foreign Office records. Now that King Leopold has requested the British Government in the name of the Congo Free State to renounce the Article, the British Government is ready to grant this request and wishes to know in advance if we will accept this solution of the incident.

[1] Italian Ambassador in London.

I promised the Ambassador to obtain the commands of His Majesty and the Imperial Chancellor at once.

2. [*Extract*] Immediately after Sir Edward Malet's visit I went to the French Ambassador and informed him of the request that had been put to us to regard the removal of Art. III as a satisfactory solution, seeing that from the start our protest had been directed against this Article only and was pointless, now that it had been removed. In accordance with this attitude, which we had maintained all along, now that the matter was formally settled, we would not go beyond Article III and would offer no declaration, which could prejudice the differences still outstanding between France and England. . . .

VIII. 473

German Note.

In a report dated February 20th, 1900 (see also p. 310) Count Metternich wrote as follows:—

He, Lord Rosebery, described himself as having been sacrificed for Sir Percy Anderson. When the British Government was preparing an agreement with the Congo Free State, Lord Kimberley, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, thought it a good moment for securing for England a narrow strip for a road along the German frontier inside Congolese territory. Lords Rosebery and Kimberley conferred with Sir Percy Anderson, who had special knowledge of the matter from having been at the Congo Conference. At the time of that conference Lord Rosebery was not in Office and was therefore not informed of the course it was taking. He asked the expert whether there was any question of German rights. Sir Percy, with incomprehensible forgetfulness, had distinctly denied this, and Lord Rosebery first became aware of the mistake when the German Government made its justified protest. He was so angry with Sir Percy, that he never spoke to him again.

Later on Lord Rosebery gave this account to the Emperor at Osborne. At the end he said: 'I dare say the Emperor did not believe a word of what I said, and I don't wonder, because the whole story seems too absurd; still it is the exact truth.' (English in text.)

VIII. 130

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, COUNT VON CAPRIVI, *June 20th*, 1894

Extract.

I found an opportunity of discussing in detail the Congo question with the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.

I said to the two Ministers: 'Le traité conclu le 8 novembre, 1884, entre l'Empire Allemand et l'État du Congo, ainsi que l'Acte du Congo de 1885, ont fixé d'une manière nette les limites et les rapports entre l'Allemagne et cet État. Pour changer cet état de choses, il fallait le consentement du Gouvernement Impérial, fait reconnu par l'Angleterre ellemême. Déja lors de la convention Anglo-Allemande du 1 juillet, 1890, le Gouvernement

Britannique avait exprimé au Cabinet de Berlin le désir de posséder une bande de terre entre le territoire allemande et la frontière de l'État du Congo, ce que le Gouvernement Impérial refusa expressément, parcequ-une telle concession aurait amoindri sa situation politique et interrompu ses relations de commerce directes avec l'État du Congo. Si le Cabinet de Londres voulait néanmoins par la Convention Anglo-Congolaise du 12 mai dernier (Art. III) obtenir la bande de terre qui s'étend du port le plus septentrional du Lac Tanganyika jusqu'au point le plus méridional du Lac Albert Edward, il aurait besoin avant tout du consentement du Gouvernement Impérial. L'Angleterre, en négligeant un devoir aussi clair et en essayant d'attendre son but au détriment et à l'insu de l'Allemagne, a commi une infraction grave aux traités en vigueur. Par conséquent le Gouvernement Impérial a protesté contre la Convention Anglo-Congolaise du 12 mai dernier, et il ne la reconnaîtra pas avant que satisfaction pleine et entière ne soit donnée à ses droits et à ses intérêts violés.'

I added that a desire for compensation was not felt in Berlin, but that there was determination not to declare satisfaction until the portions injurious to legal and treaty rights were removed from the agreement between England and the Congo State.

Our quarrel with England was in itself highly unwelcome and disagreeable to the Italian Ministers. This present Government, they said, purposely and avowedly based its foreign policy on co-operation with the Triple Alliance on the one hand and Great Britain on the other. The opposition of interests between Germany, the leader of the Triple Alliance, and England meant failure for the politicians here. Baron Blanc in particular was for the moment so depressed as to speak seriously of retiring, for the policy to which he had for a long time devoted himself—that of co-operation as much with England as with Germany—had become impossible.

In answer to these complaints I said that the former friendly relations between Germany and England would not revive, until England saw her error and was ready to repair it. The Imperial Government had given England no cause for her unfriendly action, but had rather, since the start of Germany's colonial policy, been careful to maintain friendly relations with her. England's recent agreement with the Congo State betrayed, however, such hostile intentions on England's part, that we could under no circumstances submit to such injury to our rights and interests. If the Italian Government at heart wished for the restoration of the former Anglo-German intimacy—and good relations between London and Berlin were certainly to Italy's interests—they should themselves make the attempt to bring Lord Kimberley and Lord Rosebery to reason. Until England

gave way, the Imperial Government would second no efforts with which Great Britain had anything to do. . . .

VIII. 136

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *November 25th*, 1894

Cipher. Extract.

Baron Blanc informed me in confidence that a few days ago the British Ambassador, Sir Clare Ford, asked him in conversation why Count Tornielli had been recalled from London. He had replied as follows:

'The present Italian Government's foreign policy was based on co-operation first with the Triple Alliance and secondly with England. The Italian Government went on the principle that Italy, Great Britain, Austria-Hungary and Spain, with Germany in reserve, would maintain the *status quo* in the Mediterranean and defend this and Italy's interests there and in Africa against French aggressions. For a whole year Italy has not failed to support England. But whilst Italy has been helping England in Morocco, England has been working for France there. In Constantinople England is complaining at the increase of French influence. But instead of laying the blame for this on her own compliance to France—Sir Philip Currie has never roused himself to warn the Porte with energy against the French plots in Tripolis and its hinterland—England is uttering baseless complaints against Germany. M. Hanotaux might take it ill if England associated herself openly with the Harrar Treaty, which Italy concluded in order to identify her interests completely with those of England on one point at least.'[1] . . .

VIII. 138

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *November 30th*, 1894

Extract.

. . . In the confidential and detailed discussion, which followed the reading of your despatch of November 24th,[2] Baron Blanc complained bitterly of the policy of Lord Rosebery's Cabinet, which he described as short-sighted, petty and full of contradictions. There was still, however, nothing for it, he added, but to go with England as before, so far as Italy's vital interests permitted. Thus we ought not to be surprised at his supporting British policy wherever possible, and especially in Egypt. For if he began competing with England for France's

[1] Cf. p. 158. [2] Not given.

favour, the result might be that England would be even more compliant towards France than now seemed to be the case. 'I shall behave to England', said Baron Blanc, 'like the philosophic husband, who knows all about his wife's wanderings from the straight path, but ignores them before the world, in order to spare her reputation, hoping for better days.'

The Minister is particularly pleased that Your Highness' despatch confirms what I have been saying to him for weeks and months about the ill-success of the British attempts to draw nearer to France. It is in the nature of things that a genuine and lasting Anglo-French entente would be the most disagreeable political combination that Baron Blanc could have to deal with. In order to allay his keen anxiety in this direction, I read aloud to him very confidentially the parts of the report of the Imperial Ambassador in Paris of October 31st, which has been forwarded to me and deals with the deep-seated lack of harmony between the French and English. I told Baron Blanc also that the Imperial Ambassador in London declares that the understanding between England and France (which Count Tornielli considers both certain and imminent) is practically impossible in every direction. . . .

German Note.

Count Münster's report was as follows: 'Anglo-French relations have certainly not become better. Negotiations are in progress on the question of the frontier line between the Protectorates in Africa. From what Mr. Phipps, the negotiator, and Lord Dufferin (who returned here yesterday) tell me, it seems that these negotiations will not be finished very soon and are not likely to lead to any desirable result. Nothing is being done about Egypt or Madagascar; both these questions are open wounds.'

I pointed out in my reports last summer (June 20th, 1894) that disagreements between England and Germany are fatal to the true friends of the Triple Alliance here, because their foreign policy has all along been based on England's co-operation with the Triple Alliance. If British policy were so unwise as to turn definitely away from Germany, the result of such a suicidal attitude might be that the entire withdrawal of British influence might turn the Mediterranean into a French lake, and also divert the Italian desire for aggrandisement from North Africa to the Trentino, Trieste and Istria.

IX. 181

COUNT ZU EULENBURG, IN VIENNA, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *December 14th*, 1894

Extract.

As an indication of the situation, Count Kalnoky informed me that he had knowledge of the contents of a letter from the Prince

of Wales, in which the latter expressed great satisfaction at the existing possibility of an understanding with Russia. The character and personality of the new Tsar,[1] he writes, is a pledge for lasting realisation of the advantages which might arise out of a connection between England and Russia.

German Note.

The Prince of Wales was present at the funeral of the Emperor Alexander in St. Petersburg on November 19th, 1894.[2]

Count Kalnoky has been struck by the Prince's reception on his return from St. Petersburg by a population which is not usually accustomed to offer him ovations. This fact, also, is a sign, indicating a change in British public opinion, and no leading British statesman, he said, is able to ignore that, when he is forming his policy. If, before very long, the Tsar were to visit London as well, and the Emperor were still shrouded by a mist of ideas on freedom (which, in comparison with his father, did not imply very much), a kind of popularity would finally have to be feared, which would influence public feeling still more deeply, and, indeed, in an objectionable sense.

VIII. 140

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *May 9th*, 1895

Extract. Confidential.

Turning to Anglo-Italian political relations, my British colleague said that Baron Blanc found much to complain of in the general trend of British policy, and in particular because England was paying too much attention to France. This attention was constantly being shown and indeed was of the nature of the case. England was obliged to humour a country which was not only as strong as France by land and sea, but also able to incommode the Cabinet of St. James's in so many and such vital questions. The Italians should reflect that British intimacy with Italy did not exclude good relations between England and France. 'Les ennemies de nos amis ne sont pas nécessairement nos ennemis.' For the rest, Sir Clare Ford said that he was convinced that the maintenance of Italy as a Great Power in the Mediterranean was a necessity for England. I remarked that from what I heard said in Italian circles, it did not appear quite certain that the Italians in the long run would be satisfied with mere platonic protestations of affection on England's part. If Italy were treated too much as a negligible quantity by England, she might end by losing faith in England. 'Belle Philis, on désespère alors qu'on

[1] Nicholas II. [2] Cf. Lee, *King Edward VII*, I, 692.

espère toujours.' My British colleague replied confidentially that he personally shared this anxiety. In London, however, they wished above all not to be bothered, and they shrank from decisions, which would demand of them a higher standard of energy. The British Ambassador added very confidentially that the Italians must wait patiently, until a Conservative Ministry came into power in England, which might happen before very long. Sir Clare Ford added casually that in London they were not dissatisfied with General Ferrero (the new Italian Ambassador). 'Ferrero bothers us less than we were afraid that he would do.' . . . (English in text.)

[Lord Salisbury returned to power on June 26th, 1895.]

VIII. 141

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN ROME, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *June 21st*, 1895

Very confidential.

King Humbert is waiting for the Change of Ministry in England with not much less impatience than his Foreign Minister. He said that Lord Rosebery and Lord Kimberley were really too incapable. It was hardly possible to take seriously British Ministers, who wished to join with France and Russia. The Rosebery Cabinet carried its consideration for France to a pitch which could only be described as timidity. Lord Rosebery's habit of yielding to the French had misled many Italians about England, although everyone here was convinced of the need of co-operation between England and Italy. They hoped that Lord Salisbury would soon come into power, and said that Italy is far from wishing to make disagreeable and exaggerated demands on England. She merely wishes that England may remain true to herself and her traditions.

VIII. 141–2

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *August 31st*, 1895

Cipher. Extract.
Secret.

I took leave also of Sir Thomas Sanderson, the Under-Secretary of State. In the course of conversation he tried to convince me that nothing in the domain of foreign policy was altered here, and that Lord Salisbury's inclination was still to remain on good terms with the Triple Alliance. But he did not deny that there had been a time during Lord Rosebery's Ministry, when there

was great irritation against Germany on account of our 'unfriendly' (The EMPEROR: '*!*') attitude on the Congo question. There had also been displeasure at our refusal to co-operate with England at the time of the settlement of the Chino-Japanese difficulties, whilst the moment the Russians invited us to do so, we had taken our part in it. Any deviations from the otherwise friendly policy of the British Government towards Germany—e.g., the rapprochement with Russia, and a policy in Morocco somewhat more friendly to France—were merely the result of this irritation.

I naturally denied, as unfounded, the allegation that we were unfriendly in the Congo affair, and insisted that our action was prompted by England's previous want of consideration in the question and was justified. (The EMPEROR: '*They admitted this to me in England a long time ago.*')

CHAPTER XXIII

LORD SALISBURY AND THE FUTURE OF TURKEY. JULY–OCTOBER, 1895

[It was becoming evident that it was useless to expect the Sultan Abdul Hamid to carry out the Reforms promised to the Powers, and Lord Salisbury, on his return to power in 1895, was led to consider the steps to be taken supposing the Turkish Empire collapsed.

His conviction that Turkey, as an Empire, would inevitably fall apart at no very distant date, caused him to throw out vague suggestions and invite opinions on the subject. The suspicions of Germany, Russia and France were at once aroused,[1] and negotiations ensued, which resulted in a fresh scheme of reform, agreed to by the Sultan, with which the British Government was forced to be content. The fresh massacres of Armenians [2] which recommenced within a month of the Sultan's promise (October, 1895) and the British attitude with regard to them added fuel to the suspicions entertained on the Continent.]

X. 40

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *July 10th*, 1895

Very confidential.

Yesterday when I mentioned to Lord Salisbury the news from Macedonia and Sofia, he interrupted me in order to return to the Armenian question, which seemed to cause him far more anxiety.

German Note.

In June, 1895, an outbreak occurred on the Bulgarian frontier, which led to a collision between Turkish and Bulgarian troops, and to explanations between the Porte and Bulgaria, in which the representatives of the Great Powers took part.

He said: 'If the Sultan would propose to us a Governor whom we could accept, we could remain calm, and not make demands, which would injure his sovereign rights or his dignity. But lacking such an assurance we cannot draw back. (The EMPEROR: '*That is Rosebery's doing.*') Public opinion here is, believe me, too deeply engaged (*le courant est trop fort*). The

[1] Cf. Baron Eckardstein: *Ten Years at the Court of St. James.*

[2] Cf. Chapter XXIV. Also Blue Book: *Events in Sassoon*, I; parts 1 and 2.

time may always come, moreover, when Russia and England may again come to an agreement (The EMPEROR: '?'), and that would mean the end of the Turkish domination.'

I remarked that I could not imagine this agreement coming to pass, for Russia would not wish for an autonomous Armenia on her borders. The Minister replied: 'Of course not, but the changes which would ensue might be quite otherwise and to Russia's advantage, so that she would wish for it.'

Although our conversation was quite confidential and unconstrained, I did not for the time being follow up this train of thought, but I have no doubt that the Minister had in his mind some kind of partition of Turkey, by which the Turkish provinces on the borders of Russia should become not autonomous, but Russian.

We then returned to the question of the Governor to be appointed by the Porte, and Lord Salisbury said: 'If only the Sultan would propose Reouf Pacha, the former War Minister. Shakir Pacha will not do for us. *Il est entièrement Anglo-phobe.*'

I am quite certain that the Minister does not wish the Eastern question to be re-opened and to end in the partition of the Turkish Empire. (The EMPEROR: '*Saurma can suggest something to the Sultan in a friendly manner, on the lines proposed by Radolin.*')

X. 44

BARON VON ROTENHAN, IN BERLIN, TO BARON VON SAURMA, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, *July 25th*, 1895

Telegram.

According to our latest information, consideration for British public opinion will force the British Government to take energetic action, unless Turkey soon shows readiness to meet its wishes.

Please bring pressure, according to your standing instructions, on the Sultan and the Porte to give way to England, as being in Turkey's best interests.

X. 5

[On July 14th, 1895, soon after the Conservative Party, under Lord Salisbury, returned to power, Baron Blanc, the Italian Foreign Minister, handed to the Ambassador, Bernhard von Bülow, in Rome, a Memorandum, complaining that 'la porte de notre Protectorat dans le sud (of Erytrea), le port de Zeyla, nous restait fermé. L'Angleterre pourrait sans aucun risque de conflit international nous laisser la porte méridionale de notre Protectorat, qui est Zeyla, ce qui assurerait la paix dans l'Abyssinie et mettrait fin à une situation à laquelle nous ne voudrions pas voir prendre un caractère international. Pour Zeyla à defaut de cession—ou bien de Condominium, qui serait agréable en nous liant à l'Angleterre—nous nous sommes reduits dernièrement à nous contenter de la présence à Zeyla d'un Commissaire civil avec drapeau italien. . . .']

X. 10–11

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO BARON VON HOLSTEIN, *July 31st*, 1895

Private letter.

I saw Lord Salisbury yesterday and found him in a good mood and ready to talk. I began my communication of the Blanc memorandum by saying that I had come specially this time, trusting to his long-proved discretion, to commit an indiscretion, which I considered necessary in the interests of the case. It would certainly interest him to read Baron Blanc's 'secret' paper and to observe Italy's aims, the feeling prevailing in the present Italian Government, which was favourable to the Triple Alliance and especially to England, and also the conclusions to be drawn from the paper as to the future development of Italian policy.

Lord Salisbury read the document through very carefully and only stopped once to say with a smile: 'C'est une femme légitime qui demande à être payée.' When the reading was finished, he thanked me and added that he wished to answer my 'indiscretion' by another, on the subject of his views and intentions in the matter. He then developed fairly fully the idea that the Italian enterprise in that part of Africa was a failure, and, even with England's help, would not lead to a useful result. But circumstances made it impossible that, however great the desire to please Italy, this help could be carried so far as was being demanded by Italy. England could not give up Zeyla, for it was necessary for the security of her own interests in the Red Sea.

In continuation, Lord Salisbury, after requesting me to keep this strictly confidential, said he was going to try and meet the Italians on another point, which he considered far more important for Italy than the sterile enterprise in Africa.[1] He referred to Albania and Tripolis, two Provinces, which the Italians had long wished to possess and would be really valuable to them. His idea was to bind the Italians by a really advantageous assurance and so bring about what he would like to call 'une division des réclamations à Constantinople'. I put several questions in order to obtain a clear notion of his meaning, but I must confess that I was only partially successful. Two points are to be gathered from it: (1) that if England continues her protests, as she did in the Armenian question, against the failure of the Turkish administration in certain parts of the Turkish Empire, Italy should do the same in respect of other parts of Turkey at the same time; (2) that England, in order to strengthen her action in Constantinople, which now is circumscribed by the

[1] Cf. H. W. Wilson, *The War Guilt*, p. 49.

French and Russian reserve, wishes to secure the active co-operation of Italy. I may assume that Lord Salisbury contemplates both the above and that his aim is to attach Italy in future even closer than before to England's interests in the Mediterranean, by allotting to her two of Turkey's provinces in the Mediterranean, and assigning to her an active rôle in Constantinople.

From this point of view, it was extremely interesting that Lord Salisbury, perhaps intentionally, developed during our conversation the theory that even if the Armenian question were temporarily laid to rest, Turkey was in general '*trop pourrie*' to exist much longer. I merely replied: 'If that is really true and Turkey collapses, what then? And how do you think that her property may be divided amongst the Powers interested?' The Minister answered that this would certainly be no light task, but there would be no difficulty to-day, if England had not committed the mistake of rejecting the Emperor Nicolas' offer to the British representative before the Crimean War (Egypt to England, Salonika to Austria, etc.), a mistake which he, Salisbury, would certainly not have committed.[1] I also appealed to my historical reminiscences and alluded to the negotiations between Napoleon and the Emperor Alexander which failed mainly because Napoleon was willing to concede at the most Constantinople, but not Constantinople *and* the Dardanelles at the same time. Lord Salisbury became meditative and remarked finally that the affair offered great difficulties, as it was nearly certain that if Russia acquired the Dardanelles, she could at any time combine with France to threaten British interests in the Mediterranean very seriously.

The above exposition shows first, in my opinion, that Lord Salisbury realises the value of an understanding with Italy and is certainly not disinclined to concede something for it, if he can thereby attach Italy to England's policy and secure her co-operation in the East. I think it will be well worth our while to consider seriously whether to further this understanding, which would also mean a strengthening of the Triple Alliance, and bring it to a conclusion as quickly as possible. As you will notice, Salisbury shows me the same confidence and frankness as formerly.

The Minister's words show, secondly, that his views regarding the integrity of Turkey have undergone a real change, and that he is to-day filled with the conviction that, if England is not to be left behind, she must reckon with the possibility of Turkish disintegration and the possibility of partition. The premises, which we for our part must consider with regard to the developments of European policy, would be quite different and perhaps

[1] Cf. *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, II, 340.

more to our advantage, because there is always the possibility, which Bismarck sought for years, that a peaceful understanding between Russia and Austria (partition of spheres of interest) may be effected, whilst the chief reason for Russia's annoyance with us would disappear, and French friendship for Russia would lose much of its point. For the sake of shortness I confine myself to these indications, the more since you know all this quite as well as I do.

Finally I would say that I feel that Salisbury would not object to our quietly taking steps to make his idea known in Rome. At all costs he wishes his words not to be known and especially that they shall not be published in any official document.

Next Sunday, August 4th, I go to Cowes and take staff and figures with me. Salisbury will certainly be there once during the visit. If it appears in any way necessary, I can quite well come here from Cowes in order to talk to him.

German Note.

The Emperor was in England from August 4th to 16th.

X. 13–14

BARON VON ROTENHAN, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *August 1st*, 1895

Telegram.

The tone and tendency of Lord Salisbury's foreign programme are not much liked here. There is lacking the feeling of reciprocity—the idea that England herself might one day have to make concessions to those States whose support she needs. It is not clear why Lord Salisbury can make no concession at Zeyla (Erytrea). It would even be useful for England to fix Italy there firmly in the expectation of a Russo-French forward movement. Any concession at Zeyla would be a surer proof of the reality of a British feeling of solidarity than the Albanian plan suggested by Lord Salisbury, which would be objectionable politically to the Triple Alliance, as well as to England.

The way in which Lord Salisbury speaks of the break-up and partition of Turkey makes us suspect at once—not for the first time—that this British statesman would like to hasten the process in the hope that England might be able to hold aloof from the struggles on the Continent resulting from it, or, as she did in the early Napoleonic wars, control the situation and conditions, i.e., dictate the conditions of her co-operation,—but not *begin* them.

But is Lord Salisbury sure that the mere fear of seeing Albania in Italy's possession would not drive Austria out of the Triple Alliance and into the enemy's camp? Notwithstanding this

risk, Lord Salisbury will probably not be willing to give up his plan, for so long ago as the Congress of Berlin he showed his wish to bar Austria's road to Salonika for reasons connected with trade.

This standpoint is perhaps now also the British Minister's compelling motive, for otherwise it would not be difficult to find other objects to satisfy Italian greed. The new partition of the Mediterranean coastal countries is hardly conceivable without a war, in which France would take part. If France is beaten, Tunis, for instance, will become available for Italy, and she would then be obliged to drop her claims in the Balkan Peninsula, as she cannot have everything everywhere.

It is hard to believe that a thoughtful politician like Lord Salisbury has not considered the results which the mere fear of an Italian annexation of Albania would have on Austria's relations both towards the Triple Alliance and towards England. Would Lord Salisbury wish to fill up the gap made by Austria's defection by drawing in France—likewise by concessions at the expense of Turkey, China or some other Power? If this is *not* Lord Salisbury's scheme, he will do well first to ascertain Austria's attitude, before discussing the question of Albania any further. Otherwise he may find that Austria will be lost, without France being gained.

It is still uncertain whether the question by itself will not upset Vienna. It would be certainly less risky for Lord Salisbury either to satisfy the Italians at once with Zeyla, or with the hope of extending their North African possessions.

For Germany caution and reserve are essential, so long as the aims and even the methods of British policy are still in the clouds.

X. 16

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *August 3rd*, 1895

Secret. In answer to telegram of August 1st.

In very confidential conversation with Lord Salisbury I developed my ideas regarding Albania, which I said had occurred to me since we last discussed it. I did not conceal that I had exchanged views privately with Your Highness. I said that I thought a clear and exhaustive discussion between Lord Salisbury and myself was all the more necessary, because his political programme had evidently undergone a change in one essential point since he was last in Office. Formerly he used to put forward the integrity of Turkey as one of England's essential interests. Now he was assuming the break-up of the Turkish Empire, followed by its partition, which he appeared, if not exactly to welcome,

at least to think no longer so very undesirable. If, as a practical consequence, he thought of allotting, when the time came for partition, a province to Italy, which Austria would hardly relinquish to them, I considered that it might react on the Triple Alliance in a way which we could not ignore. Any weakening or loosening of the Triple Alliance, brought about by British policy, would in my personal opinion make it necessary for us to consult our own sole interests. We should confine ourselves to watching events and take care, if a European crisis arose owing to the East or the Mediterranean, to come down with all our weight on the side whose policy guaranteed our interests and security.

Lord Salisbury replied at once with great emphasis that he could *absolutely* assure me that my assumption that his political program had changed since his last term of Office was totally unfounded. He set quite as much store on maintaining Turkey as before; he desired neither her collapse nor partition, and would certainly do nothing to help or hasten it. But he could not keep his eyes shut or fail to realise that the force of circumstances was ever bringing that possibility nearer, however undesirable it might be, and that it was urgent to reckon with it and its inevitable consequences in advance. He had, however, spoken no word of it to any but myself, being convinced of my discretion, and was not doing so to produce premature anxiety on any point. He entirely and unconditionally shared my view that above all things Austria must not be disquieted. Therefore if my belief was correct that it must be assumed that a promise to Italy regarding Albania would be a stone of stumbling in Vienna, it was obvious that such an idea must be given up at once.

I remarked that something might perhaps be found in another direction, which would satisfy Italy better than Albania, and Lord Salisbury at once said: 'Do you mean Morocco? I should have nothing against that.' I said that I knew that England had intentions there herself. He replied that England's modest wishes there would not stand in the way of amply satisfying Italy by giving her some Moorish territory. I did not reject this hint, which may be of use later on, but at the same time I said that there was still another point on the North coast of Africa, which Italy would value, namely Tunis. This also the Minister did not reject; he merely asked how it was thought that this could be eventually carried out. I replied that it seemed not altogether impossible that France would utterly oppose the proposed partition in the East, and that if her opposition was unsuccessful, she would have to renounce possession of Tunis. This being so, a promise to Italy might be regarded in Rome as being worth having. To this also the Minister raised no objec-

tion on principle, and I think it not impossible that he may eventually agree to some such secret assurance to Italy.

I then touched on Italy's present desires regarding Harrar, etc.,[1] and asked very confidentially whether, if Lord Salisbury thought it really impossible to give up anything on the Red Sea coast, he could not make some concession to the Italians in the interior of that part of Africa. He replied first that the Italians already claimed for themselves such an extent of territory there, that hardly anything remained which could still be acknowledged here as their property. But when I continued to insist, he expressed willingness to obtain more information as to what further concession, if any, England could possibly make there. He also begged me to consider it myself and added the following significant remark:

'For reasons that you know, I think it necessary, in view of certain eventualities, to agree on a sort of partition scheme in the East and particularly in the Mediterranean. I have told you my ideas in confidence, and you see that I am prepared for modifications of them. It would, however, be useful *if you would yourself prepare a scheme, which you would consider suitable and practicable, and if we could discuss it together in strict confidence.*'

From this conversation and Lord Salisbury's whole attitude I gather a decided impression that above all, as far as depends on him, he wishes to maintain and strengthen the Triple Alliance (even more than to secure for England Italian assistance, which he does not rate very highly). His natural reason is that he sees in the Triple Alliance the best security for British interests. Also that he wishes to agree with us on a plan for satisfying Italy and holding her tight, without giving Austria cause for annoyance and for leaving the Alliance. Therefore he merely said to Count Deym before his departure for Vienna that conditions in Turkey were becoming steadily worse, but he still wished to postpone her collapse as much as possible. To me he said yesterday that Austria might eventually find satisfaction in the direction of Salonika. I made it clear to Lord Salisbury that we think caution necessary, and that if a policy injurious to us were undertaken here, we should not hesitate to consider our own interests. We could now form an idea of the aims and methods of British policy, even apart from the Minister's latest suggestions, if I were in a position to go into his proposal and offer, apparently as from myself, a plan which seems to me right for the future settlement of matters in the East and the Mediterranean. He would then have to declare himself; he has given us many proofs of his discretion.

[1] Cf. p. 158.

Lord Salisbury goes to Osborne the day after to-morrow, Monday, and returns to London on the Wednesday.

X. 19

BARON VON HOLSTEIN TO KIDERLEN, IN THE EMPEROR'S SUITE AT HELIGOLAND, *August 3rd*, 1895

Telegram.

Letter received. Count Hatzfeldt has not had time to report officially on Lord Salisbury's latest remarkable proposals.

The telegram and letter, both of which you have, are all that we have at present.

The one object of all the British Minister's present proposals is in my opinion to relieve the unpleasant position in which England finds herself with France and Russia about Egypt, by producing complications in Asia Minor and the Balkans, into which all continental Powers, including ourselves, would be dragged, rather than England. A tremendous and acute British need alone can explain why Lord Salisbury, who usually pays the greatest consideration to Austria and does not like Italy, should now be ready to offer Albania to the Italians, which would deal Austria a heavy blow and probably also smash up the Triple Alliance.

For Germany it is chiefly important that Turkey should not collapse before it has been arranged that our two friends, Italy and Austria, are not left out of it at the death. It is England's task, and not ours, to bring about this understanding, for we have no wish to give Turkey her knock-out blow, whereas Lord Salisbury would like to. Until the amount to be 'inherited' by Italy and Austria has been settled between these two with the help of England, we must—perhaps with Russia, France and Austria—oppose all violent Anglo-Italian 'reform proposals' in Constantinople.

I do not think that Lord Salisbury will pursue for the present his scheme for a flare-up in the Balkans—for that is what his proposals amount to—if he comes up against determined opposition from the Emperor and realises that His Majesty sees through him.

I have telegraphed—although needlessly—to Hatzfeldt to inform the Emperor in good time, i.e. before he sees Lord Salisbury. But you can do the same with the material that has been forwarded to you.

The Emperor will, I think, quickly see the point. To me a very clear indication of what is behind Salisbury's mind is his refusal to give Zeyla to the Italians. He would prefer to excite them against the Balkan Peninsula and make them take it all on

themselves. And they will too, if they give themselves up to it and have hopes of Albania.

X. 45

BARON VON ROTENHAN TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, AT ALT-AUSSEE, *August 3rd*, 1895

Telegram.

The Imperial Ambassador in Constantinople telegraphs:

'The Porte's answer was handed to the three Powers today.[1]

'The Russian and French representatives appear satisfied with it, although they declare that the concessions should have been more comprehensive and more clearly expressed.

'I have no certain knowledge of what the British representative thinks, but his earlier statements cause me to assume that his Government, wishing to see the Armenian question settled, will make no great difficulties with the Porte about accepting the answer.

'A more detailed report follows.'

Germany advised the Sultan to give way on the Armenian question out of consideration for Lord Salisbury, who complained that his predecessor had committed him to a certain extent. But Lord Salisbury has surely some other reason for wishing to keep the question of Turkish reforms on the Orders of the day.

England sees herself—with Italy at most as her only companion—threatened in Egypt by France and Russia. It would therefore be pardonable egoism in England, if she makes an effort to divert attention to the Balkans and Asia Minor by keeping alive the question of reforms for Armenia and other parts of the Turkish Empire.

We believe that Europe will have to choose between 'reforms' and 'Turkey'; it will be long before these two conceptions become one. Since Germany and Austria have no visible interest in hastening the speedy break-up of Turkey, it seems questionable whether these two Powers ought to continue to support the British Minister's systematic interference with the internal conditions in Turkey.

Your Highness may think fit to discuss this question with Count Goluchovski and to explain to him that our views, as sketched above, are mainly inspired by our friendly interest for Austria.

[1] Cf. *Staatsarchiv*, LVIII, 120 et seq.

X. 49

BARON VON SAURMA, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *August 10th*, 1895

Extract. Confidential.

I beg to forward the Porte's answer to the note of the three Powers regarding the reforms in the provinces of Asia Minor.

I gather from confidential statements by the representatives of these Powers that they believe it essential to insist on three points being accepted: the establishment of a permanent Commission in Constantinople, consisting half of Mussulman and half of Christian officials, to see that the reforms are carried out; the foreign representatives to be empowered to bring before the Commission any complaints coming from the Provinces, that come to their knowledge; the local Mudirs to be elected by the local Councils and not to be appointed by the State; and finally the admission of Christians as officers into the Gendarmerie. . . .

X. 20–1

BARON VON ROTENHAN, IN BERLIN, TO KIDERLEN, IN THE EMPEROR'S SUITE AT COWES, *August 4th*, 1895

Telegram.

Count Hatzfeldt reports that he called Lord Salisbury's attention strongly to the risks of his latest programme and in the end found him quite amenable. He particularly warned the Lord (*sic*) against wishing to do anything which might separate Italy and Austria again. But we must keep watch and are doing so.

X. 22

KIDERLEN, AT COWES, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *August 5th*, 1895

Cipher telegram.

I have discussed Lord Salisbury's scheme in the sense of the two telegrams (August 3rd and 4th) which have been received here on their way, with his Majesty, who describes it as 'truly English' and says that he will have nothing to do with it.

X. 22

COUNT HATZFELDT, AT COWES, TO BARON VON HOLSTEIN, *August 5th*, 1895

Cipher telegram.

Your telegram of August 3rd received yesterday.

I fully take in your meaning and shall naturally act on it; but before the final decisions are taken for the further develop-

ments, I would privately remind you that if Lord Salisbury, having advanced so far, now finds that we are avoiding any agreement with him and shall refuse to help on an understanding between him and Italy or Austria—I having meanwhile recommended him to make concessions to Italy and to consider Austria's interests—I think it not impossible, and in fact probable, that nothing at all will be done with Italy or Austria, and that Italy will *at most* get an Agent at Zeyla with or without the flag. I hope I am wrong, but fear not, because Lord Salisbury will too greatly fear indiscretions in Vienna, and even more so in Rome, to be willing to advance proposals there regarding the future of the East.

I am sure that Lord Salisbury would do but little for Italy *by herself*. For him she is above all a means to hold the Triple Alliance and bring it on to his side. For that he would promise Tunis, Tripolis and most of Morocco, more than Italy would otherwise dream of getting.

I must not deceive either you or myself. If we withdraw entirely, that is, if I can offer neither views nor advice, I can exercise no further influence worth mentioning over Lord Salisbury's decisions in the matter. Of course it was not for me to advise destroying the connection with Russia, of however little benefit I expect it will be to us now. But Lord Salisbury's 'plan' frankly contemplated very rich satisfaction for Russia in the East, Constantinople *avec tout qui s'ensuit*. The one cheated was evidently to be France, unless a sop was to be found somewhere for her also. It is at least questionable whether Russia will much mind France's eventual disappointment, if she herself gets Constantinople, etc., and I think that it would scarcely be to our disadvantage if Russia, once satisfied in the East, saw no reason for keeping up the French friendship at our expense.

German Note.

On July 9th, 1895, in conversation with Count Hatzfeldt, Lord Salisbury did actually play with an idea of partitioning Turkey, by which theTurkish Provinces next the Russian frontier should become not autonomous, but Russian. [Cf. p. 327.]

I have no doubt that, if we participated in the understanding, Lord Salisbury would also grant to us a suitable share in the territories, which would be set free. But it is another question, whether he would cede a British possession to us, or if any British Minister would be strong enough, in face of public opinion, to withdraw from Zanzibar. I can conceive this in two cases only; either an agreement offering important advantages to England, which the public would recognise as such, or a war in which England needed our help at all costs.

X. 25

COUNT HATZFELDT, AT COWES, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *August 7th*, 1895

Extract. Secret.

Yesterday afternoon, at the desire of Her Majesty the Queen, the Emperor wished to receive the Prime Minister for a second conversation on board the *Hohenzollern*. This came to nothing owing to the chance fact that at the hour appointed by the Emperor, Lord Salisbury had been commanded to attend the Queen, and after this it was too late for him to pay a visit on board the *Hohenzollern*. This morning the Prime Minister was recalled to London for business which could not be postponed.

German Note.

According to Eckardstein (*Ten Years at the Court of St. James*, p. 57) there was a second conversation between the Emperor and Lord Salisbury on board the *Hohenzollern* on August 8th, which ended very violently and left behind it a deep and lasting mutual dislike. But Eckardstein's whole account, with its dramatic embellishments, must be relegated to the domain of fable. For according to the records (cf. especially Lord Salisbury's letter to Count Hatzfeldt—see p. 340), it is quite certain that no such conversation on board the *Hohenzollern* took place at all. Eckardstein's conclusions, drawn from the Emperor's alleged attitude against Lord Salisbury, also fall to the ground. That it was Lord Salisbury's behaviour, and not the Emperor's, that was incorrect is shown clearly by the British Premier's letter of apology of August 8th, after he had entirely ignored the Emperor's telephonic invitation to come and continue the conversation, thus causing the Emperor to wait from 2 to 3 hours in vain. Moreover, the Emperor had reason for feeling insulted by the article in the *Standard* (a Government organ) which greeted the Emperor's arrival, for in it the hope was expressed that William II would receive a lecture on political wisdom from the Queen. The personal clash with Lord Salisbury, following this article, may well have caused the Emperor to feel annoyance. Thus Holstein's remark to Eckardstein on March 20th, 1901 (*Ten Years*, p. 208), is comprehensible : ' By his boorish behaviour in the autumn of 1895, Lord Salisbury succeeded in inducing in the Emperor, England's best friend in Germany, a temper, which contributed to the despatch of the Kruger telegram.'

[No English newspaper could be correctly described as a 'Government organ,' since not one was actually dependent on the favour of a party.]

In a similar strain, though less abrupt, Holstein, on October 31st, 1901, expressed himself to Valentine Chirol, formerly *Times* Correspondent in Berlin : ' Immediately on His Majesty's arrival in England, Lord Salisbury laid before him a scheme for partition, but received a rebuff, the vehemence of which may well have been felt as an insult ; for, when the Emperor next sent for him, Lord Salisbury avoided a renewal of the discussion, but went off to London instead. This snub to the Emperor formed the subject of a long diplomatic correspondence between Berlin and London and caused a feeling, which was not without its influence on the Emperor's attitude at the time of the Jameson Raid.'

What is to be found in the records makes it doubtful whether the Emperor's feeling against Lord Salisbury was so violent from the beginning.

In a minute on a Vienna report (August 18th) the Emperor referred to the fact that the idea of partition could not be driven out of Lord Salisbury's mind, especially after his public statement in the House of Lords on August 15th, and certainly he showed sympathy towards the idea and tried to see its good side.

A minute by the Emperor to a report by Baron von Saurma on the bad state of Turkey (August 22nd) is similar: 'Very interesting and correct is this sketch of the conditions; it corresponds with my own observations. According to it, Lord Salisbury's idea of putting an end to the present Government is not unjustified.'

Holstein's assertion regarding the Emperor's long-continued ill-humour must have been founded on the 'lengthy correspondence' following on Lord Salisbury's private letter of apology, but there is no trace in the records of this correspondence. . . .

A careful search of the records has shown that no memorandum by the Emperor himself is among them concerning his conversation with Lord Salisbury. There is not the slightest trace of one. It is not quite clear whether Sir Valentine Chirol, who described his interview with Holstein (October 31st, 1901) in the *Times* of September 11th and 13th, 1920, under the head-lines of *Ex-Kaiser and England. New Chapter of Diplomacy*, really saw a memorandum by the Emperor, as Eckardstein suggests (*Lebenserinnerungen*, III, 13); Chirol merely says that Prince Bülow ordered 'that I should be allowed to peruse what purported to be a copy of the Emperor's own record of the Cowes conversation'. A memorandum by Holstein on the interview with Chirol refers to Chirol's English version of it and states that the suggestion for partitioning Turkey came not from the British, but from the German side, and that Lord Salisbury only avoided further discussion of this ticklish subject by hastening his departure. 'I had the records all ready and read aloud parts of Count Hatzfeldt's report of July 31st and a warning sent to Kiderlen at Heligoland on August 3rd. Chirol remarked: "That is a serious matter. Up to now it was generally supposed that a Prime Minister's word could be believed. Now I know the facts."'

The above must have been that to which Chirol referred as a 'copy of the Emperor's own record of the conversation'. But it is proved for certain that the partition proposal came from Lord Salisbury and not from Germany. [See also Sir S. Lee, *King Edward VII*, I, 670.]

X. 27

Lord Salisbury to Count Hatzfeldt, *August 8th*, 1895

Particulière.

La Reine me mande que S.M. l'Empereur mardi après midi a attendu deux ou trois heures pour me voir. C'est la première fois que j'ai compris cette circonstance et j'en suis désolé.

Je n'avais pas la moindre idée que S.M. voulait *causer* avec moi et quand à trois heures trois quarts j'ai reçu un téléphone qu'il voulait bien me recevoir à 4 heures, j'ai imaginé que c'était une politesse gracieuse de sa part—et quand je suis sorti de l'Audience près la Reine, j'ai cru l'invitation annulée par la grande longueur de mon Audience.

Je n'ai qu'à répéter mon très grand regret pour le désagrément que j'ai involontairement causé à Sa Majesté.

Croyez moi toujours le vôtre.

X. 28

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *August 14th*, 1895

Cipher telegram. Extract.

In my conversations yesterday with Lord Salisbury and Baron de Courcel, it struck me particularly that both are greatly preoccupied over Morocco. Baron de Courcel remarked that France could certainly obtain Morocco here, but without the important Tangier, which England was reserving for herself. Lord Salisbury showed his former anxiety about French aspirations in Morocco, but said that France would agree to a lot in order to get it.

X. 29

BARON VON HOLSTEIN TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *August 14th*, 1895

Telegram. Private.

Lord Salisbury's statements regarding partition have been treated as quite secret ; I shall ask Rotenhan about it to-morrow. Lord Salisbury is probably angry, because the Emperor would not be converted to the idea of partition. France in Morocco, i.e., with more control of the Straits of Gibraltar, and Russia in the Dardanelles, within reach of Port Said—such a programme proposed by England is only to be explained, if we assume Lord Salisbury to believe that, if carried out, it would lead to a general European war, in which England would play her usual part. And indeed, if Morocco were partitioned, Italy would try to drag the Triple Alliance into it.

Faced by such a policy on England's part, we dare less than ever cut ourselves off from Russia.

Lobanoff and Salisbury show certain similarities ; arrogance, inconsiderateness, refusal to admit equality of rights for other interested parties.

I shall report to the Chancellor on Saturday afternoon. Let me have your views before then.

X. 29

BARON VON ROTENHAN TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *August 15th*, 1895

Telegram. Drafted by Holstein.

. . . The fact of Lord Salisbury's having shirked the second conversation with His Majesty allows one to suppose that the first one, in which His Majesty showed an interest in the continu-

ance of the Turkish Empire, annoyed the British Minister. He seems still to cherish the idea of finding a relief from difficulties in Egypt, to judge from what you report on his and the French Ambassador's statements regarding Morocco.

It depends on the good will of Europe whether Morocco can be partitioned, so as to make England and France the chief beneficiaries, without a European Congress beforehand. Even judging from the remote German standpoint, I have my doubts of this, since not only the territory of Morocco, but also the European balance of power, and for us particularly the existence of the Triple Alliance, have to be considered.

But perhaps the affair will not amount to so much, if England and France fail to agree about that part of Africa which controls the road from the South.

The French Ambassador's statement in your telegram of August 13th shows that Baron Courcel does not consider a settlement of the Anglo-French differences with regard to their interests as at all certain.

German Note.

The relevant sentence in Count Hatzfeldt's report of August 13th runs: 'Finally Baron de Courcel indicated clearly that in Africa, *where England always grudged everybody everything*, France and Germany might arrive at an understanding over several matters.'

[Speech by Lord Salisbury in the House of Lords, *August 15th*, 1895. *Extract.*

. . . The Sultan's one fear appears to be lest he should do anything which would sacrifice the apparent independence of his country. But the independence of Turkey, though it is written in the Public Law of Europe, though it is guaranteed by the Treaties of Berlin and Paris, is yet a very special kind of independence. It is an independence that exists by reason of the agreement of the other Powers that they will not interfere with it and that they will maintain it; and the danger, of course, which the Powers have felt from the first time that the policy was initiated, has been lest, in maintaining the Turkish Empire, in protecting it from the ambitions of other Powers, in giving it a stability, which it would not naturally possess,—they would be working for a mechanism, which does not work for human happiness and progress, but rather shows tendencies towards weak government and towards free license to the antagonism of creed and race, which have for many centuries been the curse of the Provinces of the Turkish Empire. . . .

How long the present state of things will go on I confess appears to me more doubtful than it did twenty years ago. The noble lord (Rosebery) himself said that the permanence of the Sultan's rule was involved in the conduct he pursued. If, generation after generation, cries of misery come up from various parts of the Turkish Empire, I am sure that the Sultan cannot blind himself to the possibility that Europe will at some time or other become weary of the appeals that are made to it, and the factitious strength that is given to his Empire will fail it. I have earnestly tried to impress upon the Turkish Government the extreme gravity of the conduct which it has pursued. . . . (See Hansard, Vol. XXXVI, p. 50.)]

X. 30

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *August 16th*, 1895

Cipher telegram. Secret.

For Baron von Holstein.

My conception of the situation is as follows:

Lord Salisbury sees, as did Lord Rosebery, difficult times coming for England and is trying to protect himself in time. His predecessor attempted to make impossible arrangements with Austria and also Germany. Now Lord Salisbury is looking for a scheme of partition in the East, by which to ward off the crisis and satisfy everyone more or less; but England is to hold her own without drawing the sword and perhaps reap still further advantages. He is still by no means clear as to the details of the scheme, the difficulties of which he does not deny. The object of his secret conversations with me was to ascertain *first*, what plan we would agree to, if at all, and then, if we agreed together, to win over Italy and Austria through us, and probably Russia too. Then England would have gained her point, without paying a high price for another Power's assistance. France, separated from Russia, would hardly risk a great war without her, and eventually a sop would be sought for her in Syria or elsewhere. That is Lord Salisbury's notion. He does *not* desire a war between the continental Powers, and he does not calculate so far, I am convinced. If this happened England could not play her former part, for if Italy and Austria were defeated, she would be delivered helpless to Russia and France and would have to accept their conditions. Any peace concluded between the fighting Powers would, moreover, cost England dear, as she would have been helping neither side. Lord Salisbury knows all this perfectly well.

On the other hand, we have to reckon with Russia, where the present Government is just as unfavourable to us, and treats us with equal, if not less consideration, in cases where we wish to help them. We have much to fear from Russia, but nothing to hope for, so long as she is not pledged by a binding agreement. I think that Russia will never give up the French friendship, in which the danger for us really lies, until we consent to make the road to Constantinople easy for her, either by dropping Austria or by inducing her to come to an understanding with Russia—and this Bismarck never was able to do.

Under these circumstances I am convinced that our interests prescribe that we shall not break off our connections on either side, but preserve our ability to come to an understanding with either. . . .

X. 72

PRINCE VON LICHNOVSKY, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES IN VIENNA, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *October 10th*, 1895

My impression of the proposed attitude of the Austro-Hungarian Government regarding the Armenian troubles, is decidedly that Count Goluchovski is about to take up a 'prophylactic' offensive. The Foreign Minister wishes, by diplomatic means on the one hand, to prevent the affair assuming incalculable proportions through attacks on foreigners and other deeds of blood, and on the other not to be left isolated as against England, France and Russia. It is certain that he counts on our support, and also that a negative reply from Berlin at this moment would especially irritate and anger him. He explained with some vehemence that, however little interested in Eastern affairs, a Power like Germany could not remain passive in face of events entailing a menace to its nationals at any moment. He thought therefore that a close understanding with the Imperial Government was particularly essential.

I represented that we should take part in the steps planned by him, if all the other Great Powers also participated, and I tried to strengthen him in his desire to act in agreement with the statesman most interested, i.e., Lord Salisbury, of whose reserve hitherto Count Kalnoky's successor complained strongly, as I have reported.

[The Agreement between the Porte and the representatives of England, France and Russia regarding the Reforms to be introduced in the Armenian Provinces in Asia Minor, was ratified by the Sultan on October 17th. For the text, see *Staatsarchiv*, LVIII, 166 et seq.]

X. 77

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM II TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *October 20th*, 1895

Telegram. Extract.

In this way (by inducing Russia to protect the Christians against the Mohamedans) England would get rid of her two rivals and embroil them with each other, without the Dardanelles being given up, as Russia could not use all her strength to obtain them, owing to being involved in a life-and-death struggle with the Mohamedan world. . . . I was strengthened in this opinion by a chance remark by the Empress Frederick, who never usually discusses foreign politics with me, at a dinner at Strasburg. She said:

'The massacres of Christians in Turkey are quite horrible. It is the duty of all Christian States not to stand this from Turkey; the blood of the massacred Christians may not go

unavenged. The Sultan's Government is incompetent and outrageous and ought to have a short shrift. His life, moreover, is in danger, since the discontent in Turkey shows that it is in a state of ferment. We must be prepared for a general rising of the Moslems against the Sultan. This is by no means impossible, and would not the Russians then perhaps attack Constantinople ? '

All this shows that the situation in the Mediterranean is very unsettled and that England's action must be watched most sharply. I beg you to give suitable instructions to the Ambassadors in London, Stamboul, St. Petersburg and Paris.

The CHANCELLOR'S *reply. Extract.*

. . . Her Majesty the Empress Frederick's words indeed seem to be the key to Lord Salisbury's schemes. But I think that Russia is too clever to be caught in the British trap. If, without occupying Constantinople, she takes the Sultan under her protection and defends his independence she would avoid the conflict with the Mohamedan world and cross the British schemes.

X. 35–6

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *October 25th*, 1895

Cipher telegram.

In a detailed and very confidential conversation to-day Lord Salisbury first referred to the news in to-day's *Times* of a secret Russo-Chinese Agreement, and said that he had received no confirmation of it. But, as he had said before, it would be not at all unwelcome to him if Russia became deeper engaged in China. Her attention would be drawn away from the Near East, and with her remaining forces she would not be strong enough to dream of moving out of the Black Sea at the same time. England would only raise objections, if Russia insisted on *exclusive* rights for her ships at Port Arthur.

The Prime Minister showed special gratification that the Armenian question was settled, as it meant that at present there was no fear of the Turkish Empire's breaking up, and it was no longer necessary to worry over the future of its component parts. He said that his first wish was to maintain European peace. But if a crisis arose owing to a Russian advance in the Near East, he would immediately and first of all turn to Berlin, in order to agree with us on a joint attitude. He added that in Vienna they were greatly worried about the East and had feared that he, Lord Salisbury, might let the Russians have the Dardanelles. He had therefore informed Count Goluchovski that he had never expressed such an intention and could only promise to consider

Austrian interests first of all in all that concerned the Eastern question.

Without engaging myself in any direction, I told the Minister in a friendly but distinct tone that England's uncertain policy hitherto, for which his predecessor's mistakes were perhaps partly responsible, had produced mistrust nearly all over Europe, and nobody believed any more that British policy had definite aims or would carry them out consistently.

To the Minister's declaration that if a crisis threatened, he would first immediately seek an agreement with us, I replied that I should always be ready to listen to him, *if it was not already too late.*

The new British Ambassador [1] will have been fully instructed here, so as to be able to speak on all questions that the Emperor may wish to discuss.

X. 91–2

PRINCE VON RADOLIN, IN ST. PETERSBURG, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *October 29th*, 1895

Extract.

Prince Lobanoff [2] said to me . . . that Russia and France only joined England in the Armenian question, because they feared that if England acted by herself, she would in her folly undertake against the Porte some step entailing serious consequences—e.g. an ultimatum with a naval demonstration and armed force to follow—which last Russia could not allow. The two Powers had therefore joined up with England, in order to apply an extinguisher and to have the right to interfere in the decisions in the direction of moderation; Russia could never approve England's policy in Turkey.

This opinion finds its confirmation in the fact, which I reported before, that since the spring the Russian Government has been hinting every possible encouragement to the Sultan not to take the Armenian reforms too seriously (and if any reforms are introduced at all, to make them apply preferably to the whole Empire), at the very time that it was outwardly going hand in hand with England. (The EMPEROR: '*Not a pretty story.*'). . . .

In every circle in St. Petersburg there is evidently very strong displeasure against England. All that England does fills the Russians with suspicion, and the public assumes that any joint action with England must be to Russia's disadvantage from the start. In proof of this I enclose an article in the *Grashdanin* for October 19th.

[1] Sir Frank Lascelles. [2] Foreign Minister.

It is roundly asserted here that Russia has been outwitted by England both in Turkey and in the Pamirs Treaty.

They resent deeply here England's attitude in the Far East and would like to conclude a Railway agreement with China, before England could attempt in any way to interfere and render the scheme fruitless. It is remarkable that side by side with this animosity against England, there is unmistakably a certain feeling of fear of her. They watch with the greatest tension and anxiety every indication pointing at a rapprochement of England towards Germany, or vice-versa. I hear that the Queen of England is corresponding privately with the Tsar and even the Tsarina and trying to bring the two Governments nearer together. But the irritation against England on all sides is so great, that not even the Tsar could succeed in completely altering the feeling. (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*')

CHAPTER XXIV

THE ARMENIAN FAILURE. SEPTEMBER, 1895–JANUARY, 1897

[The Sultan's cynical promises of reform given in October, 1895, were immediately followed by organized massacres of Christians throughout Armenia and Asia Minor. It soon became evident that England stood alone in the desire to coerce the Sultan in any form whatever. The other Powers suspected Lord Salisbury's motives in continuing the agitation and refused to consider any proposal for solving the question, which fell therefore into abeyance.

A rumour (which was successfully denied) was put about that Lord Salisbury had offered to form a Condominium [1] in Constantinople with Russia.]

X. 65

BARON VON SAURMA, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *September 18th*, 1895

The action of the three Powers has had no definite effect so far on the latest offers by the Porte in the Armenian question.

But the Turkish Embassy in London communicated yesterday to the Porte a declaration forwarded by Lord Salisbury from Dieppe to the Foreign Office with instructions to hand it to the Turkish representative as the expression of the position now taken up by the British Government in the Armenian affair.

It has been handed to Rustem Pacha by the Foreign Office in the form of an Aide-mémoire and is as follows:

Lord Salisbury désire arriver à une conclusion de l'affaire Arménienne, mais il faut que le Sultan donne des garanties pour la sécurité de la vie et des biens des populations dans les six provinces en question.

Pour atteindre ce but deux méthodes se présentent:

(1) adopter les réformes proposées par les trois Puissances dans le Memorandum,

(2) laisser l'administration musulmane actuelle et instituer dans les provinces en question une Commission Internationale qui aurait à signaler aux Ambassades les abus qui s'y commettent.

In reply to this Turkhan Pacha has instructed Rustem to

[1] Cf. p. 359.

declare that the Porte can under no circumstances accept the International Commission contemplated by Lord Salisbury.

The Turkish Ambassador's instructions attempt to show that the Porte by complying with the six points, which were finally conceded, has met all the demands put forward by the three Powers in their first Note.

Looking somewhat closer at the course of the question under dispute, one is almost led to believe that Lord Salisbury's alternatives are intended to force the Porte to accept the first 'method' unconditionally. . . . It is obvious that the Sultan would be ready to do anything except set up a foreign tribunal, which would destroy his prestige in Asia Minor.

XI. 8

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM II TO BARON VON MARSCHALL, *October 25th*, 1895

Extract.

I said to Colonel Swaine, the British Military Attaché, in conversation, that the British Press and its influence on public opinion was to blame for the purposeless scandal of the Armenian question. It displeased the Russians above all. *Hinc illae lacrimae!* The Colonel agreed and spoke very bitterly of Argyll, Westminster and Mr. Gladstone, who had conjured up the whole trouble. He had recently again talked to Lord Salisbury, and had also received a letter from him, and all that he heard showed in what a horrible situation this unhappy heritage had placed the Premier. He did not yet know what to do, as he still felt insecure in the saddle, and he was trying to approach each nation in turn in order to find out what they thought of Turkey. He was luckily on good terms with Germany and was, as his letter said, at the point where he was in 1892. A few questions of a secondary nature in Africa, in themselves of minor importance, must be treated in a conciliatory spirit with mutual friendliness and breadth of vision. I replied that this greatly interested me. England's policy in Armenia was to me quite incomprehensible, and this feeling among the nations had led to their all, without exception, being filled with a strong mistrust of England. All the continental Powers were agreed together in the intention of upholding the *status quo* and maintaining order in Turkey by settling the so-called Armenian question quickly. The only country with less consideration for Turkey was England. The extraordinary articles which appeared lately in England, and the Speech from the Throne, in combination with the Premier's very aggressive speech against Turkey, had caused the continental Powers to suspect that England wished to alter her Mediterranean policy.

This mistrust had been increased by the cruises taken by the Mediterranean squadron for weeks together in front of the Dardanelles, and it was everywhere being said that England wishes to give Constantinople to Russia, to win France by concessions in Egypt, and to take the Dardanelles herself. I looked the Colonel hard in the eye ; he ' winced ', as the English novelists would say. He exclaimed at once : ' We don't dream of it.' I went on to say that the attitude sketched above was a complete reversal of England's Mediterranean policy. England had only held Egypt, because Germany was behind her ; if she gave up that country and with it her direct communications with India, it was not my job or that of the Triple Alliance to carry on England's policy in the Mediterranean by ourselves. The partition suggestion was, moreover, a breach of the Treaty of Berlin, in defence of which every Signatory Power would at once take action ; without their consent even England could not break it.

[The rest of the letter is given on p. 368.]

X. 94

BARON VON SAURMA, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *November 1st*, 1895

Cipher telegram.

The news in my telegram of the massacres at Erzerum is confirmed to-day.

It is said that the provocation came from the Armenians again. This massacre is all the more extraordinary, since it took place under the eye of Shakir Pacha, the Commissioner entrusted with the restoration of order. (The EMPEROR : ' *It is quite unheard of.*')

X. 96–7

BARON VON SAURMA, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *November 5th*, 1895

Cipher telegram.

The rising in Diarbekir has turned into a general massacre of all Christians, without distinction.

There is news also from several other parts of Asia Minor of fresh massacres, with which the authorities are either unwilling or unable to deal. Anarchy reigns.

In view of this the Ambassadors have agreed to represent to the Porte personally by word of mouth the following :

' The representatives of the Great Powers are disturbed at the situation in the provinces, where there is complete anarchy, which is no longer connected with the Armenian question and threatens the Christians of all nationalities alike.

'In Diarbekir massacres and robberies have extended to the non-Armenian Christians, who have given no provocation.

'In Mosul, Bagdad and Syria, where there are no Armenians, the ferment has reached a dangerous pitch. The Porte ought to have learnt from the occurrences in Syria in 1860 that such anarchy cannot go on with impunity.

'The representatives of the Great Powers are constrained to report it to their Governments, which will agree together on the steps to be taken, unless measures are taken at once by the Porte to remove the abuses.

'They request the Foreign Minister to inform them of the measures the Porte intends to adopt to put a stop to the prevalent disorders.'

X. 101

BARON VON SAURMA, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *November 10th*, 1895

Cipher telegram.

The strained situation continues.

Outbreaks of savage rage are reported from the Sultan's immediate circle. He is supposed not to be sane, and they tremble before his bloodthirsty commands. No one feels secure of his life for a day. From many sides the same thing is reported—that the Armenian massacres are mainly due to direct orders from Yildiz Kiosk. Although the people's hatred for Abdul Hamid is being shown more openly and with less concealment, there is no idea of revolution at present, for there are no men ready to place themselves at its head.

German Note.

A telegram from the German Foreign Office (November 18th) requested information regarding the source of an article in the *Morning Post*, which reported a change in England's Turkish policy, and whether the reason was a Turkish concession to England or the fear that Russia might occupy Armenia.

X. 107

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *November 19th*, 1895

Cipher telegram.

I have at present no reason for supposing that the *Morning Post* article was inspired by the Government. Up to now the *Morning Post* has not been held to be the Government's organ. On the other hand, it has been my impression recently that Lord Salisbury considers greater moderation towards the Sultan advisable. In confirmation of this I thought remarkable the

Prime Minister's words to Count Deym, as reported to me, that he agreed with the Austrian proposal (i.e., to appoint a European Commission on the basis of Art. 61 of the Treaty of Berlin), but that he still hoped that the Sultan would succeed in re-establishing order. I see no signs of concessions by Turkey and assume that England's momentary increase of reserve is caused by the wish expressed by Lord Salisbury, in his speech of November 9th at the Lord Mayor's Banquet, not to disturb the harmony of the Powers. For this reason, and in order to make Austria take action, I think that Lord Salisbury answered the Austrian Ambassador's question whether he had any proposals to make, in the negative, thus leaving Austria to take the initiative.

I am to see Lord Salisbury to-morrow and will then report further.

X. 109

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM, AT RUMPELHEIM, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *November 21st*, 1895

Cipher telegram.

A conversation on politics, which the Empress Frederick recently had with me, may be of interest to Your Highness.

HER MAJESTY: I am extraordinarily anxious about the turn which the Turkish affair is taking. You must call a congress at Berlin.

I: I should be afraid that nothing very brilliant would come out of a Congress; besides, Germany has only the smallest interest in the East, and the Congress in no way protects the Christians, nor does it stop the Turks from cutting their throats.

H.M.: Yes; but the Powers must hold together and take action jointly when the time comes, and constrain the Sultan by force.

I: How?

H.M.: They must make an agreement, and then march in, or sail through the Dardanelles together.

I: The horrors are taking place in the interior of Asia Minor, hundreds of kilometres from the coast. Demonstrations by landing parties from squadrons are therefore useless; only one Power, Russia, can march in with troops. A joint advance through the Dardanelles has been discussed by the Great Powers, but it was rejected by France and Russia together, and so it is in abeyance.

H.M.: That is a great pity. These French are infamous people; whenever they can help the Russians in any disgraceful action, they do it with pleasure and will stand by them in everything. But what on earth will happen, if matters end in war

complications? There are so many interests at stake—with us, for instance, Egypt is in the greatest danger. The Powers might agree to entrust another Power—Russia, for instance,—with a mandate to march into Turkey and pacify it. Would not that do?

I: In itself, this idea might be carried out; but once the Russians have marched in, who is to determine the limit of their advance, and when will they go out again?

H.M.: That is correct, but it is the lesser evil of the two. Finally, why should they not obtain something for it?

I: As things are, any advance or any naval demonstration is on the horns of a dilemma. A mere demonstration no longer affects the Sultan, who hates the Armenians and will have them exterminated still further. He counts on the Powers being divided. The danger in an advance into the country is that, in the eyes of his Mohamedan subjects, the Caliph is ready to force on them reforms which they hate with the help of the hated Christians. This might lead to risings in Constantinople and attempts on his life. Fear of this will likewise deter him from putting an end to the massacres of Christians.

H.M.: The position is impossible and quite dreadful. In her present condition, Turkey cannot hold together any longer, and it must end in a general collapse.

I: It is a pity that Mr. Gladstone interfered in this question at all and compromised Lord Salisbury with public opinion.

H.M.: That is quite true; but there are things in which public opinion in England holds the decision.

I: Is it not possible that Lord Salisbury may be thinking of settling the Eastern question by a partition?

H.M. with warmth: Of course, that is the only way of deliverance out of this *impasse*; Turkey must be partitioned.

I: How could that be done?

H.M.: Russia must acquire the Dardanelles *and* Constantinople, the Sultan must give up and clear out of all his possessions on European soil. His effete regime must no longer defile the soil of Europe. Asia Minor is large enough, and Bagdad must become the Caliph's capital, as it was in old times.

I: Then what will the Austrians say to that, and what are they to get?

H.M.: The Austrians would be donkeys to think of resisting, for Russia will march on Constantinople with the elemental force of a lava stream. She cannot be prevented from taking the Straits; *she has a good right to do so*, for she must have an outlet for her trade. For this Austria must be compensated; she must occupy Albania, Montenegro, Servia and as much of Macedonia as will give her free access to Salonika. Salonika must become

a great Austrian trading port and naval station ; that was settled long ago.

I : But the Greeks will want something. What are they to get ?

H.M. : All the islands, Crete, and the villages in Macedonia on the side of the mountains of Rhodope.

I : And what does France get ?

H.M. : France can take Syria, where she has already much influence. Then England will have Egypt without interference. Russia must be satisfied in the Mediterranean Sea and be kept interested and occupied, as fully as possible, in the Far East ; then she will leave Europe in peace.

Her Majesty's point of view will fairly correspond with that of the Queen and Lord Salisbury ; it is on the whole clearly thought out and holds together. She gave me her views in a very lively and impressive fashion, and was apparently anxious about the position of affairs. The opinion was decidedly expressed that the Turk has no more to look for in Europe.

This conversation is to be communicated to Count Hatzfeldt in strict confidence, so that, by making suitable use of it, he may sound Lord Salisbury. When his reply is received, both are to be communicated very confidentially to Rome, Constantinople, Vienna and St. Petersburg.

X. 112

THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, TO THE EMPEROR, *November 22nd*, 1895

. . . England is highly nervous, because she sees Egypt seriously threatened by the Franco-Russian group. She wishes to keep it, but if possible without a war. (The EMPEROR : '*Correct.*') The various British schemes—the naval demonstration (since negatived), a European mandate to be offered to Russia, and finally the partition of Turkey—have but one object, to leave it to other Powers to see to the restriction of Russian expansion . . . both as regards time and place, England thus being relieved of the task. (The EMPEROR : '*Yes.*')

The most practical way out, however, from the British point of view, would be unquestionably a second Congress of Berlin. The first one cut down Russia's claims, prevented an Anglo-Russian war and turned Russia's lasting hatred upon Germany (The EMPEROR : '*Yes.*')—three successes for England. It is natural that Lord Salisbury, who, like myself, attended the Congress and well remembers the results of it, should strongly wish for a repetition of it, and that from the German point of view, I, on the other hand, should earnestly dissuade Your Majesty against

it, if ever the question comes seriously before us (The EMPEROR: '*Agreed*'), whether Berlin or any other Capital were contemplated as the meeting-place. A Congress makes silent caution impossible and allows of no reserve, but sets all who take part in it simply on one side or the other, however much or little each one may be concerned. By the mere fact of participation in a Congress, Germany would at once be forced out of her present attitude of reserve on questions affecting the Straits. (The EMPEROR: '*Correct.*')

If, as Her Majesty the Empress said, England desires above all peace in Egypt, she merely has to convince Austria and Italy, the two Powers whose interests in the East and Mediterranean can easily be brought into line with those of England, that they will not be left in the lurch by England at the decisive moment. (The EMPEROR: '*Correct.*')

The enclosed telegram of yesterday evening from Bülow (our Ambassador in Rome) will show Your Majesty that in the last few days, i.e. since the Cabinets of Rome and Vienna began to show signs of activity, a certain corresponding weakening has been observable in British policy.

It must not be concluded that the British Government's views of its interests in the Mediterranean have altered in the last fortnight, but merely that Lord Salisbury would gladly give Rome and Vienna the opportunity of setting themselves in the front rank. (The EMPEROR: '*Yes.*') The present general situation may be stated as follows: England is determined not only to keep Egypt, but also, according to our latest reports, to lay a strategic railway from Port Said to the Persian Gulf, thus gradually drawing into her sphere of influence the great stretches of territory between these two termini. British claims, as extensive as these, cannot humanly speaking be reconciled with the Franco-Russian consciousness of power with all its consequences. England sees the conflict approaching, and she is directing every effort towards postponing it, in the hope that *interea aliquid fit*, i.e., that something will happen meanwhile to divide the continental Powers. (The EMPEROR: '*Yes, and that some fool may be found.*')

On the other hand, the Powers whose future is threatened by the Franco-Russian group, must make it their business to avoid a sharp conflict with that group, if possible until England has been pushed to the utmost limit of her philosophic patience and recognises that she must join the fight. It cannot be judged at present with certainty whether the Salisbury Cabinet will continue to regard, as a possibility politically acceptable, the acquisition of the Dardanelles by Russia, with the Sea of Marmora as a point of departure against Port Said; but at all events it is to the

interest of the Triple Alliance Powers that Austria-Hungary and Italy should abstain from adopting a settled attitude regarding the Dardanelles before England does. (The EMPEROR: *'Correct.'*) The forces of the two former could hardly cope with those of France and Russia combined, and Germany would be faced with the unpleasant alternatives, either of giving armed assistance to her two friends, or the prospect that after the defeat of Austria and Italy, the victorious France-Russian group would turn their attention to an isolated Germany.

The indications of British policy obtained by Your Majesty contain a strong warning to German diplomacy to work so that we may be spared this choice (The EMPEROR: *'Yes'*), and that our Triple Alliance friends may maintain their freedom of action in Balkan and Mediterranean questions, until England has involved herself by treaty or action. (The EMPEROR: *'Correct.'*) The moment will certainly come, when England will find a further increase of the Franco-Russian power incompatible with her own existence, and I feel sure of Your Majesty's approval, when I say that the task of German diplomacy is clearly to prevent the Cabinets of Rome and Vienna losing either their patience or their faith in the Triple Alliance in the meanwhile. (The EMPEROR: *'Correct.'*)

Baron Blanc's recent utterances point to the fact that this Italian Minister, in spite of his natural excitability, is gradually coming round to appreciate the situation and its requirements —patience and coolness. (The EMPEROR: *'Goluchovski must do the same.—The Congress of Berlin was a mistake with serious consequences. I shall never let myself in for another.—I agree entirely with this letter.'*)

X. 114

COUNT ZU EULENBURG, IN VIENNA, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *November 21st*, 1895

My British colleague [1] invited me and the Turkish Ambassador to meet Sir Philip Currie [2] at luncheon. Count Nigra came later to greet Sir Philip, whom he had known ever since he was officially in London.

The Ambassador arrived yesterday and departs to-day by the Orient Express.

He spoke fairly openly to me and seemed to imagine that the situation was generally better. Although he found no good word for the Sultan, his expressions were very different from those he used before in Constantinople. He defended very emphatically the Armenian Patriarch against the charges that had been brought against his behaviour.

[1] Sir E. Monson. [2] Ambassador at Constantinople.

I thought the following words remarkable:

'I go to Constantinople with such very definite instructions to keep quiet and avoid all disputes, that I hope that harmony between the Powers and peace will be maintained. My task is very welcome,—and very different from my former one,' he added emphatically with a smile. (The EMPEROR: '*So both engines go full steam ahead.*')

I said that the understanding, which reigned amongst the Ambassadors in Constantinople and which had proved very workable, would make his task easier. Sir Philip answered that he could always claim to be on good personal terms with M. de Nelidoff, with whom he liked to work.

'It is certainly necessary,' he added, 'to take care not to let the harmony be troubled by intrigues.' I said that I had noticed various symptoms of these, and that it seemed very odd to me that Russia had communicated her rejection of the latest Austrian proposal to her Ambassadors, almost before Vienna was informed of it.

Sir Philip Currie replied that he also had noticed it, and that it filled him with suspicion.

That the Russian ships and troops in the Black Sea were ready for war did not seem greatly to worry him. He said: 'It probably was done, so as to be able to say—we are ready.'

X. 117

MR. MARTIN GOSSELIN, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES IN BERLIN, TO BARON VON MARSCHALL, *November 23rd*, 1895

Her Majesty's Government have heard with much satisfaction of the language used by the Imperial Ambassador in Constantinople to His Majesty the Sultan. It appears that this language has produced an excellent effect, and Lord Salisbury begs me to express to Your Excellency the best acknowledgments of Her Majesty's Government for the friendly support of Germany.

His Lordship is also glad to hear from Count Hatzfeldt that Baron von Saurma has also joined Mr. Herbert in endeavouring to obtain clemency for the insurgents at Zeitoun. A very serious effect would have been produced on public opinion if the Turkish troops were permitted to commit barbarities there.

X. 127

BARON VON SAURMA, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *December 16th*, 1895

The harmony which has reigned hitherto between the representatives of the Great Powers here in their dealings with the Sultan, is becoming more and more doubtful.

Sir Philip Currie continues to urge that the Sultan must be publicly unmasked, and the Powers be thus enabled to prevent him from causing further mischief.

'The miscreant, who has already slaughtered nearly 100,000 people and is not yet sated, must be rendered innocuous for reasons of general humanity.'

M. de Nelidoff, however, rejects all suggestions aimed at a direct attack on the Sultan or the use of forcible constraint in his Government administration.

Both colleagues tried privately to win me over to their side.

Nelidoff admitted that his positive instructions were to support the Sultan, and in all cases to refuse participation in unfriendly steps taken against him jointly by his colleagues.

Sir Philip Currie pointed to the growing dissatisfaction in public opinion in England and the resulting probability that his Government will soon be forced to act against the Sultan, the author of such endless human misery. Even the other Powers could not, in order to please Russia, allow the whole of Turkey to fall into complete anarchy through the guilt of Abdul Hamid.

According to instructions, I carefully kept up my reserve with both Ambassadors, and merely said how desirable it appeared to me to remain united, if only to be able to report calmly and objectively to our Governments and avoid the risk of their forming divergent judgments on the situation here.

From the French Ambassador's attitude, it appears that his Government—though it follows Russia in general—is not so kindly disposed towards the Sultan and his deeds, as is the case in St. Petersburg, and would scarcely take Abdul Hamid's side, if England one day became impatient and felt moved to more direct action.

That subtle observer, the Sultan, has long ago realised the change in the policy of the Powers who used to be firmly united against him, and is evidently beginning to count on Russia's support if he gets into a scrape.

It is clear that this will not help much to restore order in Asia Minor; but perhaps it is to the political interest also of Russia to keep conditions there in a more and more rotten state.

In several respects the European Powers may have reason to deplore this policy; nevertheless the dangers for them, arising out of conditions in Asia Minor, are much more distant than those coming from an outbreak of disorder in the European Provinces of Turkey—e.g., Macedonia.

To prevent this should now be the chief object of the 'conservative' Powers.

Certain suspicious symptoms indicate already that both in

Bulgaria and Greece, perhaps even in Servia, there will be preparations for action during the next spring.

The excuse could quickly be found—'The Turkish Government's promises of reform not carried out.'

A combined action by the Powers—on the one side, discouragement of the Balkan States in their ambitions, and on the other, pressure on the Sultan to grant quickly and carry out reforms in Macedonia—would, until further notice, maintain tranquillity in the Balkans, and with it the *status quo* in Turkey, which we are forced to desire, however much of a failure it may be.

Russia also would assist in this joint influence by the Powers—at least as far as Article 23 of the Treaty of Berlin is concerned in it.

I thought that I ought to submit these remarks to Your Highness, since I gather, from certain utterances by my Austro-Hungarian colleague, that it is not impossible that his Government may ask the other Cabinets whether it would not be well to take some such precautionary measures, to meet any fresh troubles that may arise in the East.

X. 255

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON MARSCHALL, *December 21st*, 1895

The British Ambassador [1] informed me to-day that in a long conversation with Colonel Swaine (British Military Attaché) the Emperor mentioned that the British Cabinet had recently proposed in St. Petersburg to make Constantinople into an Anglo-Russian Condominium. This communication had astounded him, as, when in St. Petersburg, he was never given any such commission. Did we know anything of it officially? I replied to Sir Frank that the fact that some such suggestion had been made in St. Petersburg was undoubted, according to our information. It was a minor question of form, whether it was a 'proposal' in the proper sense of the word.

Sir Frank Lascelles then urged that His Majesty's frank discussions with Colonel Swaine could only be wished for by the British Government, because it thus obtained information of the Monarch's views and intentions. He knew also how friendly the feelings were, which His Majesty cherished for England; but he deplored that a certain mistrust of the British Cabinet was shown, which he was convinced it did not deserve. . . .

X. 258

LORD SALISBURY TO SIR FRANK LASCELLES, IN BERLIN, *December 21st*, 1895

Telegram.

You may most categorically deny that the idea of a Condomi-

[1] Sir Frank Lascelles.

nium at Constantinople between England and Russia has ever even been mentioned to Russia by Her Majesty's Government.

X. 259

COUNT ZU EULENBURG, IN VIENNA, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *December 26th*, 1895

Cipher telegram.

Count Goluchovski has heard of the British Condominium proposal. He tells me very confidentially, that Herr von Szögyény heard of it from Sir Frank Lascelles, who also told him of Lord Salisbury's categorical denial.

Count Goluchovski said: 'I consider the thing to be hardly possible, and believe that it is rather a new tissue of lies by Prince Lobanoff. Such an enquiry might have been construed out of the new Armenian proposals. On the other hand, the story confirms me (though we shall, I suppose, never learn the true facts), that we should not conclude the new *accord à trois* unless England is absolutely bound. (The EMPEROR: '*If we could only manage that!*')

I was glad to let the Minister go on thinking this. (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*')

German Note.

The Armenians at Zeitoun, in the Taurus mountains, had taken up arms against the Turkish Government, in order to avoid the threatened massacres. On October 30th, 1895, they captured the Turkish Governor and the garrison of the Turkish barracks. A Turkish army of 50,000 men, which was sent against Zeitoun, failed to retake the town, which was defended by the Armenians. When the Turkish Commander, Remzi Pacha, asked for 50,000 more troops, he was superseded by Edhem Pacha. The Sultan then accepted, on the advice of the German Ambassador, the Powers' offer that the Consuls at Aleppo should mediate between the Turkish Government and the rebels. The Consuls met at Zeitoun on January 30th, 1896, and on February 10th they concluded an agreement, granting the people of Zeitoun not only complete amnesty, but also freedom from taxation for some years, a Christian Gendarmerie, and a Christian Governor from the Porte under guarantee from the Powers. This case of an armed rebellion was the sole instance in which the Powers helped the Armenians. To the mass of the Armenian people who were helplessly slaughtered the Powers continued to refuse any real help and consolation.

X. 135

BARON VON SAURMA TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *April 18th*, 1896

The Zeitoun affair, which has been the subject of a lengthy series of reports from me, may now be regarded as closed, at least in so far as it interests the Imperial Government.

The 30,000 Armenians, who humanly speaking were destined

for death, have been saved by the friendly intervention of the German and British Governments, joined later by the Governments of the other Great Powers. . . .

XII. 21

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO THE EMPEROR WILLIAM II, AT BARBY, *August 29th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

Your Majesty's Ambassador in Constantinople telegraphs:

'The six Ambassadors to-day forwarded to the Sultan the following collective telegram, in view of the position of affairs here, which is daily becoming more critical.

"Les représentants des six Grandes Puissances réunis en conférence pour conférer sur la situation, se croient en devoir de signaler à l'attention la plus sérieuse de Votre Majesté Impériale les nouvelles graves qui leur parviennent au sujet de la continuation des désordres dans la capitale et dans les environs. Des bandes de gens armés ne cessent de poursuivre et de massacrer impunément les Arméniens et non contents de les exterminer dans les rues, entrent dans les maisons, même dans celles occupées par des étrangers, pour se saisir de leurs victimes et de les massacrer. Des faits pareils se sont passés sous les yeux de quelques-uns des représentants eux-mêmes et de plusieurs membres de leurs ambassades.

"Outre la ville de telles horreurs ont eu lieu encore cette nuit dans plusieurs villages du Bosphore tels que Bébek, Roumili-Hissar, Kandili et autres.

"En présence de faits semblables les représentants des Grandes Puissances s'adressent au nom de leurs Gouvernements directement à la personne de Votre Majesté comme Chef de l'État, pour Lui demander instamment de donner sans délai des ordres précis et catégoriques, propres à mettre immédiatement fin à cet état des choses inouï, qui est de nature à amener pour Son Empire les conséquences les plus désastreuses."'

(The EMPEROR: *'Too late! The wretched people are dead, and Abdul Hamid wished it so! Let him be turned out!'*)

XII. 23

BARON VON SAURMA, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *September 1st*, 1896

The present rising of the Armenians, which has cost them so dearly, seems to be nearing its end. The number of dead is calculated at about 8,000.

The aim of the Armenian revolutionary Committee, in foolishly disturbing the peace in Constantinople, was to draw the gaze of

the European Powers once again on to the condition of the Armenians, and to force them to some extent to take action in their favour, supposing fresh persecutions took place in the capital of the country. Thus the persecutions were deliberately excited by them. But the Turks carried them on to an extent which the Armenians hardly expected, without bringing to the latter the success that they hoped for. They must, on the contrary, by their wrong-headed attempts to act for themselves, have alienated much of the sympathy that they enjoyed in Europe.

This does not prevent us from condemning the cruel methods by which the Turks suppressed the movement. The massacring of the Armenians makes it indifferent whether the Turks were guilty or innocent. Anyone belonging to this nation was cut down, wherever they found him or met him. Every victim was kicked, beaten or shot, until his last breath was drawn. The dead bodies were in general disgustingly mutilated. All the savagery of the Asiatic was displayed.

Amidst all this harassing and murdering of the population, no single foreigner was in danger for a moment. Not only the troops and the police, but also the people, armed with clubs, treated them with consistent politeness.

When driving with the head Dragoman, I passed a company of Infantry in the act of shooting. I was on my way to visit the German guard. The soldiers at once ceased fire and made way for my carriage to pass.

In fact, from first to last during this rising the foreign colonies had not the slightest reason to fear for their safety. I thought it, therefore, unnecessary to have the Embassy and the hospital occupied either by Turkish guards or by a party of sailors from the *Lorelei*. There have certainly been raids on the warehouses of foreigners, which included a certain number of Germans. But these occurred in places where the tumult was bitterest, and the anger of the populace greatest on account of the bombs thrown among Turks there by Armenians.

On the whole the European colony—with the exception of a few weaklings—did not show signs of anxiety. None of the Germans sought refuge in the Embassy building in Pera, although I placed it at their disposal.

For reasons of humanity I allowed quite a number of distressed Armenians, chiefly women and children, as well as one of their priests, to take refuge in our Embassy.

A band of Kurdish ruffians, armed with clubs and longing to get at their vanished victims, settled down in front of the Embassy, but they were driven off by a Turkish officer's patrol, which was summoned by the house-steward, and did not appear again.

XII. 37

BARON VON SAURMA, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *October 25th*, 1896

Confidential.

The steps recently taken with the Sultan jointly by England, France and Russia, for the purpose of carrying out the promised Armenian reforms, may have the desired result on a few points, but they are still somewhat ineffectual as regards the majority of the demands.

The Sultan's slowness in fulfilling his promises may be due mostly to the lukewarmness (The EMPEROR: *'Currie has told him this.'*) which the Russian Government continues to show in dealing with Armenian affairs. (The EMPEROR: *'What has Russia to do with the Armenians?'*)

The only reason why the Russian Cabinet takes a hand in the measures suggested by England in Asia Minor is in order to prevent England from acting alone and from carrying through some scheme, which Russia may not approve of. (The EMPEROR: *'Naturally.'*)

Since the beginning of the Armenian problem, Russian policy seems to have remained the same. (The EMPEROR: *'Does he only observe this now?'*) In spite of the excitement caused in Russia by the wholesale massacre of Christians, everything has been avoided which might seriously endanger the Sultan's position. It is almost comic to see how the French Ambassador here, M. Cambon, who foams with suppressed rage against the Sultan, writhes in the bonds laid upon him by M. de Nelidoff in order to keep him quiet.

In consonance with this is the Russian Ambassador's seriousness in warning the Porte against a repetition of the outrages in Constantinople. For a fresh outbreak in the capital would probably result in the appearance of foreign war-ships in the Bosphorus, which might *later on* cause a turn of affairs, likely to upset considerably Russia's special intentions towards Turkey. This is why M. de Nelidoff recently informed the Foreign Minister indirectly that if similar horrors were repeated here, he would at once order the Russian ships on the spot to open fire on the Musulman quarter.

I shall reserve for a further report the peculiar relations which seem to have been springing up between Russia and Turkey for some time past, also the possibility of how far, if at all, France will be able to participate in this Russo-Turkish intimacy.

(The EMPEROR: *'It is as if Saurma has only just discovered the aims of Russian policy; what he describes as surprising, has been known for a long time. One might as well say: How remarkable,*

that, when there are no clouds in the sky, the sun shines at midday.')

[Throughout the summer of 1896 one massacre followed another. Towards the end of the year the Sultan proclaimed an Amnesty for the Armenians who had been engaged in the risings. The representatives of the Powers soon, however, had proof that there was no intention of observing it in spirit.]

XII. 42

BARON VON SAURMA, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *January 3rd*, 1897

At the suggestion of the Russian Ambassador, all his colleagues have joined with him in a protest to the Porte against the slow, and in many cases dishonest, way of carrying out the Amnesty, lately proclaimed in favour of the Armenians.

The declaration, of which I enclose a copy, is to be handed to Tewfik Pacha by the interpreter of the Austro-Hungarian Embassy (that Ambassador being Doyen) in the presence of the chief Dragomans of the Embassies. A friendly explanation is to be given that the methods of carrying out the Amnesty are not calculated to increase any belief in Europe in the loyalty of the Porte on points, where it is a matter of the performance of definite promises.

Enclosure.

Les Représentants des Grandes Puissances font observer que la façon dont l'amnistie est appliquée par les autorités ottomanes surtout à Constantinople, détruit l'effet de cette mesure de clémence. Sa prompte exécution aurait produit un apaisement général, mais elle est appliquée avec tant de lenteur et de restrictions que l'inquiétude qu'elle avait pour but de dissiper, continue et s'accroît. Les Représentants des Puissances demandent en conséquence, que, conformément aux promesses de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, des ordres soient donnés à toutes les autorités pour la mise en liberté immédiate des détenus arméniens, en faveur desquels l'amnistie a été proclamée.

CHAPTER XXV

THE JAMESON RAID. JANUARY, 1896

[In South Africa an *impasse* had arisen.[1] The taxation of the Transvaal Republic was borne almost entirely by the Gold-mining industry on the Rand, and the foreign population (Uitlanders) of Johannesburg and district outnumbered the Burghers, so that everyone—and no one more so than President Kruger—was aware that once the franchise was extended to the Uitlanders, on any terms whatever, political power in the Transvaal would pass out of the hands of himself and his Burghers.

As early as June 1894, 'the High Commissioner, Lord Loch, had gone to Pretoria carrying a despatch in which the grant of a five years' franchise was advocated on behalf of the Uitlanders. . . . These instructions were cancelled at the last moment, because the German Ambassador had made representations in London that such action would be regarded as an interference with the *status quo* in South Africa, and, as such, detrimental to German interests in that country. And six months later, President Kruger, in attending a "Kommers" given by the German Club at Pretoria in honour of the Kaiser William II's birthday, alluded to Germany as a grown-up Power that would stop England from kicking "the child Republic."' (W. B. Worsfold, *Lord Milner's Work in South Africa*, 37; also *Rhodes' Life*, II, 110).

Encouraged by Germany's approval of his policy, President Kruger steadily refused to remove any of the Uitlander disabilities. He was further encouraged by Herff, the German Consul at Pretoria, to persevere in his oppressive methods, in the belief that Germany would give active assistance in any open conflict with England. The unwillingness of the British Government to support the Uitlanders' case by any action whatever drove the directors of the Chartered Company of South Africa to seek a remedy in violent and independent measures in the first days of January, 1896. The following correspondence will show that the enterprise was foredoomed to failure, and in any case a very great error of judgment. It effectively tied the hands of the Home Government and left the Uitlanders more powerless than ever to resist the Boer oppression, which thereafter increased in violence and was only put an end to by the War of 1899–1902.

The famous telegram of congratulation,[2] drafted in the German Foreign Office, signed by the Emperor and despatched on January 3rd, 1896, roused such a storm throughout the British Empire, that any advantage which Germany might have hoped to gain by supporting the Transvaal and increasing the difficulties of Great Britain, was very largely discounted, and the British people began to realise that if an alliance was to be sought, it could not be found in Germany.

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[1] Cf. *The 'Times' History of the Boer War*, Vol. I, and Sir L. Michell, *The Life of Cecil J. Rhodes*, Vol. II.

[2] Cf. Chapter XXVI.

In the German Foreign Office the desire was strong to bring England into line with the Triple Alliance, but the wish to prevent further British expansion was still stronger. Baron von Holstein conceived a plan for a 'continental league' against England.[1] This plan was, however, given up almost at once, when it became clear that Austria would not act with Russia, and Italy would not throw over her chance of securing England's help in the Mediterranean.]

XI. 3

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON MARSCHALL, *February 1st*, 1895

Sir Edward Malet communicated to me to-day a private letter he had received from Lord Kimberley, which is to the following effect: Lord Kimberley sends the Ambassador a cutting from the *Times*, with the telegraphic report of the President of the South African Republic's toast to the Emperor on January 27th. Lord Kimberley's comment is that the British Government can naturally only rejoice at an ovation for the Sovereign of a friendly State, but is obliged to point out that there are sundry indications that the German Government's attitude towards the South African Republic is producing a feeling there incompatible with the Republic's international position. England admittedly gave up her Sovereign rights in 1884, except that the Republic was bound by treaty not to conclude Agreements with other countries without the previous consent of the British Government. Therefore the Republic cannot form an alliance with another State until that condition has been fulfilled. The British Government desires the *status quo* to be maintained, but it is forced to the realisation that the Transvaal is gradually becoming convinced that it can count on Germany's unconditional support, and it is to be feared that this conviction will exercise a preponderating influence on the Republic's policy. England is very sensitive on this point, and the Ambassador is instructed in the interests of our good relations to call the Imperial Government's attention to these matters.

I replied that if Lord Kimberley wished to assert that it was owing to Germany's attitude that a spirit was growing up in the Transvaal incompatible with its international position, it was his duty to produce facts to support his assertion. Did Lord Kimberley consider President Kruger's toast to the Emperor to be an expression of that spirit and to be prejudicial to British interests? Sir Edward Malet denied this assumption, saying that Lord Kimberley's letter expressly approved of the toast—the fact was that Germany was 'coquetting' with the Transvaal and making them think there that whatever they did would have behind it the support of Germany. For England the Transvaal was a 'point noir' of no less importance than Egypt.

[1] Cf. Chapter XXVI. Despatch of January 16th, 1896.

I replied that, as I had often told the Ambassador, our policy simply aimed at defending against all attacks those material interests which Germany had created with the Transvaal through the building of railways and fostering of trade connections. These interests demanded maintenance of the Transvaal as a State economically independent and the safety of the *status quo* regarding the Railways and Delagoa Bay. This marked the beginning and end of our policy in those regions. If Lord Kimberley also wished to keep to the *status quo*, why did he not check Sir [*sic*] Cecil Rhodes, who was quite openly proclaiming in London the programme of absorbing the Transvaal, and at the same time attacking Germany most improperly and foolishly? This was not the first time that the British Government directed more or less disguised reproaches at the German Government, when Sir Cecil Rhodes was making her course difficult. I thought that they ought first to turn to Cecil Rhodes and stop him from proclaiming a policy, which was contrary to the *status quo* and was the sole cause of the increasing feeling in the Transvaal which Lord Kimberley deplored, and for which he was ready to blame Germany. Sir Edward admitted that it would be well if Rhodes were more firmly controlled, deplored his tactless utterances against Germany, but believed that Rhodes' and Dr. Jameson's words did not contemplate annexation, but merely the idea of a commercial Federation of the States of South Africa. I replied that it was just this notion of Dr. Jameson's—that 'Rhodesia should become the Commercial Union, Amalgamation or Federation of all the South African States' [English in text]—which was contrary to our interests, because, to put it shortly, that meant politically a protectorate, and economically a trade monopoly for Cape Colony and the exclusion of German trade. If those who wished well to the colonies in England were sensitive on the Transvaal question, so were our people in Germany; beyond this we had no Transvaal question. Except for the limitations set up by the 1884 Treaty, the Transvaal was an independent State and could establish any trade relations it pleased. If Lord Kimberley wished, as he said in his despatches, to maintain the *status quo*, our views were entirely identical, and I did not see why our agreement should not be recorded in writing. Sir Edward did not pursue this suggestion. He complained rather of Sir [*sic*] Cecil Rhodes and our difficulties in Africa, and did not deny it, when I said that Rhodes' policy of gradual absorption of the Transvaal by Cape Colony and the founding of a commercial Federation to hasten the process, could hardly be described as one of maintaining the *status quo*. (The EMPEROR: '*Agreed.*')

XI. 9

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM TO BARON VON MARSCHALL, *October 25th*, 1895

Extract (*being the continuation of the letter given on p.* 350).

I said to Colonel Swaine, the Military Attaché:—Now as regarded the point in Africa, the retiring Ambassador, Sir Edward Malet, had, on taking leave, overwhelmed the representative of my foreign policy with the most astounding reproaches about our mean behaviour towards England.

[He had complained that Germany was encouraging the Transvaal Government's hostility towards England.]

In fact, he had gone so far as to mention the astounding word 'war'; [1] for a few square miles full of niggers and palm-trees England had threatened her one true friend, the German Emperor, grandson of Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, with war! The Colonel's astonishment and confusion were great. He averred that it must be a misunderstanding and that the Ambassador must have spoken without instructions, for he knew for certain that before taking leave, the Ambassador had asked Lord Salisbury if he had any wishes or commissions for him to carry out; to which the Premier had said no. He considered such words quite unheard-of, and could make nothing of it. The misunderstanding must be cleared up at once. I replied that this tone, astounding though it was in the mouth of the suave Malet, was the tone of the British Press towards Germany. The Government papers in particular had behaved to me in the most unsuitable manner. Germany and the Triple Alliance were constantly being insulted and mocked at, and a good part of my hard work for seven years, towards bringing my Empire and England nearer together on a basis of common interests and mutual respect for the accomplishment of great moral objects (*Kulturaufgaben*), was thrown away. (The Colonel plainly admitted this.) In the interests of my country it would not do to follow all the moods of British policy and to react to the vague hints and obscure utterances of British statesmen. This attitude of England's was forcing me to make common cause with France and Russia, each of whom had about a million men ready to pour in over my frontier, whilst England had not a good word for me.

I closed the conversation with a clear warning that England could only escape from her present complete isolation, into which her 'policy of selfishness and bullying' (English in text) had plunged her, by a frank and outspoken attitude either for or against the Triple Alliance. The first demanded a formula, such

[1] Cf. H. W. Wilson, *The War Guilt*, p. 50.

as was customary between continental Powers, i.e., a sealed and signed guarantee. The Colonel seemed deeply moved and shaken.

German Note.

Colonel Swaine naturally reported his conversation with the Emperor in detail to London. He related to the Emperor in a later conversation (December 20th) its reception by the British Government, and said that it was considered so important a document, that it was printed and circulated to all Members of the Cabinet. One of them had written to him, Swaine: 'It is the most important document that you have ever sent to us from Berlin.'

XI. 12

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *October 25th*, 1895

Cipher telegram.

Referring to Sir Edward Malet's words.

I asked Lord Salisbury if he had heard from Sir Edward Malet lately, and he said no report worth mentioning had been received from Berlin for the last six weeks. (The EMPEROR: '*!*') I told him what Sir Edward Malet said on the 14th, and added that my Government was obliged to assume that the Ambassador had spoken under instructions.

The Prime Minister was evidently greatly astonished and declared most distinctly that no instructions had been issued to use the expressions in question, and desired me to inform Your Highness of the same. (The EMPEROR: '*Donnerwetter! that is strong tobacco!*') He added that for his part he had never regarded the Transvaal question as a 'dark spot' between us, and although he naturally must cling to the rights over the Transvaal, conceded to England by treaty, he shared our wish to maintain the *status quo* there.

Lord Salisbury said finally that he could only explain Sir Edward's action, which he had not sanctioned, by the fact that it corresponded with a former instruction of Lord Kimberley's. (The EMPEROR: '*Ach so! a little* désaveu *perhaps, which Salisbury allowed to stand—by an oversight?—it makes no difference. We must make all the capital we can out of this story, perhaps for a demand for an increase of the Navy, to protect our growing trade.*')

XI. 12

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *October 29th*, 1895

Telegram. Extract.

His Majesty, who regards certain expressions used by Sir Edward Malet about the Transvaal practically as an ultimatum, was of opinion, even after your telegram of October 25th arrived, that we must take the opportunity offered by this occurrence to

strengthen our Navy, for Lord Salisbury's attempt to lay the blame on Rosebery did not appear credible. . . .

XI. 15

HERFF, CONSUL AT PRETORIA, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *December 24th*, 1895

Cipher telegram.

Reports from Johannesburg cause us to fear that the British party there are preparing trouble in the next few days. The Government is taking measures against it.

(The EMPEROR: *'Shall another cruiser go from East Africa to Lorenzo Marques, or is one enough?'*)

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *December 28th*, 1895

Telegram.

I have to-day informed the British Ambassador of the contents of a telegram received from our Consul at Pretoria. . . . I pointed out to Sir Frank Lascelles the possible consequences of a collision and reminded him sharply that we require the independence of the Transvaal State to be maintained in accordance with the Treaty of 1884, and cannot accept a change in the *status quo* in the direction sought by Cecil Rhodes and the Cape Government, as it would seriously injure our commercial interests.

XI. 16

HERFF, AT PRETORIA, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *December 30th*, 1895

Cipher telegram.

The Government has just issued a Proclamation, promising to present to the Volksraad without delay all complaints of the population of Johannesburg. Shortly after the publication the Government received in my presence an official telegram, stating that 800 troops of the Chartered Company with 6 Maxims and other guns are approaching Johannesburg and are already near Rustenburg. The President at once in my presence gave orders to prevent further advance of the enemy's troops by armed force and to summon the Burgers. Conflict inevitable. President considers the Chartered Company's action to be a breach of the London Convention and counts on intervention by Germany and France. Please send powers, for the defence of German life and property, which appear seriously endangered by the Chartered Company's action, to call up an armed landing party from the *Seeadler*. I have telegraphed to the Consulates at Cape Town and Lorenzo Marques.

German Note.

According to information from the British Agent at Pretoria of December 30th, transmitted to London by the Governor of Cape Colony on the 31st (cf. Blue Book, *South Africa Republic*, C. 7933, No. 9, February 12th, 1896), President Kruger had asked for German and French intervention in all forms. The German Government certainly did not regard the Consul's telegram as a plea for intervention of that kind. Baron von Marschall declared definitely during the Debate in the Reichstag on the Transvaal question (February 13th, 1896): 'To assert that President Kruger appealed for our intervention is an error; I myself know nothing of it.'

XI. 17

Memorandum by Baron von Marschall, *December 31st*, 1895

Immediately on receipt of the telegram (Dec. 30th) from Pretoria, I invited the British Ambassador to come and see me and showed it to him. I then declared to him as follows:

From our representative's communication in combination with the news in the English papers, I was forced to conclude that affairs in the Transvaal threatened to move in the direction of an armed conflict. We had no intention of interfering in the internal affairs of the Republic, or of preventing the British party from loyally representing its wishes for an alteration in the Constitution. If the Transvaal Government asked for our advice, we should not object to certain concessions regarding an extension of the franchise. On the other hand, we found it comprehensible that the Republic refused universal suffrage to all foreigners, since this meant that the Boers would be outvoted by the British party and was equivalent to sacrificing the Boer State's independence. We should never support an aggressive policy on the Republic's part, and had made this clear at Pretoria. But if, as the latest news showed, the British party thought of extorting its demand by a threat of force and openly prepared an armed rising, the Government was within its rights in forcibly suppressing any such attempt.

There could be no mistaking the results of such an armed conflict. The *Times* of the 27th said quite frankly that there was only one possible way out; this the City columns understood to be annexation of the Transvaal by the Cape Government, i.e., the destruction of its independence. The rest of the English papers shared this view. I considered it my duty to declare to the Ambassador with all distinctness that the Imperial Government could not accept such a solution. On the contrary we must insist on the *status quo* being maintained, as determined by the Treaty of 1884. This attitude was dictated to us by our commercial and economic interests, and also by our public opinion, which would not stand our yielding in this question. We were ready to advise the Transvaal Government in the sense of modera-

tion, but we thought that we might expect the London Cabinet to use all its influence to deter the British party from extreme steps.

I added that we were always ready and willing to maintain our friendly relations with England and to influence our Allies in the same direction, but we must be able to count on more reciprocity on England's part than had so far been shown to us. I could not rid myself of the impression that the London Cabinet considerably over-estimated the antagonism which it regarded as existing between the two groups of European States, when it assumed that it was strong enough to allow British policy a free hand to look after its own interests at the expense of other States. Of late years that antagonism between the Triple Alliance and the Franco-Russian group had become considerably milder, partly under the influence of British policy ; in fact, the tension between Germany and France had almost disappeared. It would not escape Lord Salisbury's penetration that the idea, if it assumed a concrete shape, of settling questions still outstanding between those groups of States by a refusal to consider British interests and by using British interests for the purpose of compensation, might find a fertile soil in many quarters. My frank speech entailed no threat, but I considered it my duty to act towards the British Government with complete frankness. The Ambassador promised to telegraph my words to London at once.

XI. 67

German Note.

In Baron von Holstein's Memorandum (given below) there appears for the first time in official Germany the idea of a Continental League against England. It was suggested to Holstein not only by the Anglo-German tension over the Transvaal question, but also by the Italian statesmen's deep dissatisfaction with England's attitude in the Abyssinian question, which since the first fortnight of November, 1895, had caused Italy to threaten to join the Franco-Russian group. Although Holstein played with the idea of Germany, conjointly with Italy, seeking a rapprochement with the Franco-Russian group, he hoped, on the one hand, to prevent a sudden defection of Italy away from the Triple Alliance, but also, on the other hand, to prove very plainly to England the value to her of nearer relations with the Triple Alliance Powers. The fact that Holstein excluded beforehand from the understanding with France and Russia all mention of the question which was bound most to matter to France—Egypt—is an indication that he had no intention of pursuing and carrying through the idea of a Continental League with all his strength.

Thus Holstein's political system, under the pressure of the Transvaal crisis, resolved itself as follows : to keep the Triple Alliance intact, preventing defection by Italy ; with its aid to pursue a policy of the free hand, under Germany's leadership, and if possible to attract England back to a policy of friendship to the Triple Alliance and Germany ; but to join in seriously with the Franco-Russian group all along the line, *only* if England refused to see reason.

XI. 67

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON HOLSTEIN, *December 30th*, 1895

Italy is being mocked by England, who is convinced that Italy will have to follow her lead, as soon as England needs it.

If, as Blanc threatened, Italy goes over by herself to the Franco-Russians, she will depend on their clemency, being herself alone and weak.

But what if, after her Transvaal experiences, Germany goes with Italy over to the Franco-Russian side?

First of all, Austria would have to go too, for she cannot remain alone, and at *this* moment a separate agreement with the Franco-Russians is unthinkable. What could they offer Austria for it? A few bits of Germany—or Italy? The Franco-Russians would not dream of this at the moment when Germany and Italy were declaring their readiness to work for certain well-defined Franco-Russian aims. So Austria just stays in the Triple Alliance, even if Germany and Italy join *temporarily* with the French and Russians for certain *concrete* objects.

Could France perhaps be won by means of the Congo State? Compensation of the Congo State against recognition of the Treaty of Uccialli [1] and some African concessions for Germany. The way in which Lord Cromer spoke to Heyking (German Consul-General at Cairo) of the 'superfluous' existence of the Congo State seems to show that *he* would like to gobble it up or partition it at the right moment.

Russia—Korea. If Japan wished to fight for Korea, she could hardly hope for British assistance, for England realises her own isolation.

Austria, who, according to Goluchovski, wants nothing but the *status quo* in the Balkans, might receive assurances from Russia, and perhaps something extra in the future, if she still hankers after it.

Germany takes Chusan, saying nothing whatever about it during the preliminary *pourparlers*, but waits until the affair is well forward. (The exact moment is difficult to indicate beforehand.)

If the Triple Alliance joins with the Franco-Russians, it would come to an agreement only about certain *definite* objects: Congo (and allied questions); Treaty of Uccialli, Korea; Austrian wishes; a Chinese coaling station and trade advantages for Germany outside the Yellow Sea zone, not to be designated at first, as we are still looking round and examining; perhaps an understanding about the Transvaal. The maintenance of the *status quo* there will be to France's interests also.

[1] Cf. p. 154.

In any case India with its approaches (Egypt, Persia) is *not* to be touched by the agreement; for as long as England holds it, she is bound in the end, if she does not wish to retire without striking a blow, to draw nearer to the Triple Alliance. She will not really comprehend this necessity until she finds that the Triple Alliance will not follow her lead under *every* circumstance. This is the aim of the present proposal.

[On December 17th, 1895, Mr. Grover Cleveland, the President of the United States, sent a message to Congress, which almost amounted to a threat of war against Great Britain, supposing she failed to fall in with America's views on the boundary dispute between Venezuela and British Guiana.[1] He appealed to the claims asserted by the 'Monroe Doctrine'. The civilised world was taken by surprise at this sudden action. But the importance of the crisis was largely discounted by the calm with which the British Government faced it. The question was settled by arbitration in November, 1896.]

IX. 423

COUNT MÜNSTER, IN PARIS, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *December 25th*, 1895

I visited the President two days ago. . . . He spoke with much interest and detail on the present political situation.

He seemed depressed about conditions in France and said that the Chamber's recent calm and reasonable attitude might very likely undergo a change in January.

The President is occupied and worried above all else by the war threatening between England and America. He thinks that President Cleveland has undertaken a fearful responsibility by his action. Even if, as he honestly hopes and wishes, it stops short of war, the aggressive utterances and the use and interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine will have destroyed the credit of the United States for a long time to come.

Who would trust the country, when its highest official might hurl the nation into a destructive war through his own bad temper, or in order to catch votes? He mentioned the injury that the war might cause to Europe, commercially speaking. The President said he was greatly worried, and particularly so, because Lord Dufferin, who, having been Governor-General in Canada, had an accurate knowledge of the conditions, thought the war necessary and inevitable. I also know this view of the British Ambassador. He considered Canada quite safe just now and knows that the American fleet could not offer much resistance, but that in three or four years it might become more dangerous (The EMPEROR: '*Correct.*'), and then the ill-will and arrogance of the Americans would make war inevitable.

[1] Cf. Sir S. Lee, *King Edward VII*, I, 714 seq.

President Faure's next observations on the political results greatly interested me.

The Americans had chosen a bad moment for England; for England was very busy in the Near and Far East, and if there was war with America, the British squadrons at the Dardanelles and in Chinese waters would have to be much reduced, and the Russians would be free to act in both places. M. Felix Faure said very frankly the 'sick man' in the East was suffering from a dangerous disease, which must come to a head sooner or later. He could not guess what England and Russia wanted there, and this was why it seemed to him so dangerous. So far the Russians did not seem to wish to disturb the peace there; but there was the old tradition, which they would not give up, whilst England also apparently would not give up the old British tradition regarding Constantinople and the maintenance of the Turkish Empire. (The EMPEROR: '*Correct.*') Added to this was the excitement in Greece and Macedonia opposed to the religious hatred and fanaticism of the Turks. All this was bound to lead to complications in the spring. France had certainly more interests than ourselves in the East, but she did not wish to fight, but only to protect her nationals on the coast, as far as it could be done.

He desired honestly that we could both remain as neutral onlookers. The great majority of the French nation desired it. He said: 'Vous qui connaissez Paris et la France si bien, vous avez dû remarquer que les sentiments vis-à-vis de l'Allemagne ont beaucoup changé ces derniers temps, et qu'il y a une grande détente de ce côté.' (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*') I also think this is decidedly the fact, and I could but express agreement.

I did not mention Italy, but the President said finally that he had regretted exceedingly the failure of the Italian troops in Abyssinia. He always regarded such a success by barbarians against civilised nations as a misfortune.[1]

[In January, 1895, the Italians under Baratieri had won battles against the Abyssinians at Koatit and Senafe; during the year they advanced further south. On December 7th, however, they were defeated by Menelik at Amba Alagi and were compelled to retreat. They were again defeated at Makalle (January 23rd, 1896). A fresh Italian force under General Baldissera was sent out in the spring, and peace was finally signed at Addis Abbaba in October, 1896.]

The Italians were quite wrong in accusing France of having helped their enemies by sending arms, money and advice. It was particularly unfair of M. Blanc, who knew perfectly well that it was not the fact. . . .

(The EMPEROR: '*Faure has a clear and correct judgment. It would be a pity if he fell.*')

[1] Cf. Chapter XII.

XI. 69

THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, TO COUNT MÜNSTER, IN PARIS, *January 1st*, 1896

The remarks of the President of the Republic (Felix Faure) given in your despatch of December 25th, tend to strengthen our good opinion of his calm judgment. At the end of the report His Majesty remarked that he would deplore the fall of so clear-headed a statesman. The President's remarks offer a basis for *pourparlers* between him and Your Excellency, following the principle that it is possible for France and Germany, by settling a few individual questions, both current and future, to work together for their mutual advantage, without necessarily engaging the whole political future of either party. Even if President Faure is over-sanguine about the gradual drying up of the *revanche* spirit, joint action by France and Germany is still imaginable and easily realised in several extra-European questions. I do not mean that France and Germany would be alone, but I expect rather that other Powers also would be attracted to join these two for the attainment of common objects.

The idea sketched above should appeal to every statesman who has been watching carefully England's recent actions. British policy knows its aim and follows it by a straight road under the conviction that the two great continental groups are so completely 'hypnotised' by mutual suspicion, as to have neither time nor the means for resisting England's gradual expansion outside Europe. In *one* respect this British assumption fits the facts, in so far as it is a matter of the German Government's political views and aims; they assume that the destruction of England's power would not suit German interests. But between destruction and restricted expansion there is infinite room for political movements and combinations, from which we think we can no longer abstain.

A few points, however, which might form the subject of a combination between European Powers, should be omitted from the present discussion. All questions of the East and Mediterranean would under all circumstances be excluded from joint action so far as German co-operation is to be expected—also any questioning of England's position in India.

A glance at the map shows that, even with these restrictions, much remains to form the object of joint action between the continental Powers, who have merely to choose between this policy of a 'partial understanding' and supinely looking on, whilst England gradually confiscates those parts of the globe, which are not yet under European domination.

The Transvaal question, which has suddenly become so acute, will probably give Your Excellency a quiet opportunity, arising as of itself, to put the foregoing ideas to President Faure. You will be able to find some academic formula, which will put away suspicion and look as though we were trying to obtain for ourselves the support of other Powers in this Transvaal question, which is hanging in the balance.

To Your Excellency personally I add that the basic idea of this plan for a continental understanding for certain definite objects, is that the Triple Alliance has now no prospect of dealing with England, as it used to do, by attracting her to combine in the defence of the interests of the Triple Alliance and England. Whilst England finds that she can remain between the two hostile groups, not only quite happily, but also be able to continue expanding, she will naturally reject any suggestion to declare her solidarity with the Triple Alliance or any one of its component parts, in the same spirit of mockery with which she lately rejected the Italian appeal for support in the Abyssinian affair. Not until England learns by experience that the chasm between the two great continental groups is not unbridgeable, and that these groups, once they are at one in a definite case, are strong enough calmly to ignore England's opposing interests and carry on, will she understand that independence may become isolation, and isolation, danger.

After this realisation England may be content to abandon her present system of driving the two Continental groups against each other, and may join that one who would help her in protecting her road to India.

XI. 19

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *December 31st*, 1895

Telegram.

His Majesty the Emperor instructs you to ask at once in the proper official quarter whether the British Government approves the crossing of the frontier of the Transvaal State by the Chartered Company's troops.

If you have the impression that this infraction of International Law is approved, you will ask for your passports.

If this inroad into the Transvaal is disapproved, you will ask by what means the British Government intends to repair the breach of the law.

XI. 23

LORD SALISBURY TO SIR FRANK LASCELLES, IN BERLIN, *December 31st*, 1895

(*Handed by him to the German Foreign Office, on January 1st*, 1895)

The Colonial Office have sent me a reply to the following effect to my enquiries respecting the observations made by Baron von Marschall to Your Excellency upon the troubles in the Transvaal.

While concurring generally in Baron von Marschall's remarks, Mr. Chamberlain is using his best endeavours by correspondence both with Sir Hercules Robinson and President Kruger to avert violence and restore tranquillity. The Secretary of State for the Colonies is strongly opposed to a policy of violence, and entertains good hopes that its outbreak may be averted. He fully recognises that such an outbreak would be very detrimental to the various European interests in South Africa.

XI. 19–20

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO HERFF, CONSUL AT PRETORIA, *December 31st*, 1895

Telegram.

With reference to telegram of December 30th.[1]

After consultation with President Kruger, you will at once requisition a landing party from the *Seeadler* exclusively to protect the Consulate and the life and property of our nationals until the troubles are over. The Admiral has his orders. At the same time as you make your requisition, you will report here by cable.

You will explain to the President that we do not desire to interfere in the domestic politics of the Republic, but assume that the Government and Volksraad will not be intimidated by the disturbance or decide on measures, by which the governing power falls into the hands of the rebels in a legal way.

German Note.

On the same day the Foreign Office enquired of Governor Wissmann, at Dar-es-Salaam, whether he could send 400–600 men by way of Delagoa Bay to protect German interests in the Transvaal, without risking the security of German East Africa. Wissmann replied in the affirmative. The plan of introducing German colonial troops and of using the crew of the *Seeadler* did not come off, for President Kruger begged that such action should be abandoned for fear of further complications. Moreover, the failure of the Jameson Raid made it pointless. The leave of the Portuguese Government would also have been required for landing the force at Delagoa Bay. The German Government did ask for this leave on December 31st, but only for a small party, at most 50 men, from the

[1] Cp. p. 370.

Seeadler, and not, as Baron von Eckardstein asserts, for several hundred colonial troops from German East Africa *and* also a detachment from two or three cruisers lying at Delagoa Bay.[1] It was not till January 9th that a second cruiser, the *Condor*, arrived at Lorenzo Marques. According to a telegram from Derenthal, the Minister at Lisbon (January 3rd, 1896), the Portuguese refused at first; but when on the 5th the German Government renewed its request with insistence, Derenthal reported on the 8th that it would probably be granted, supposing that fresh occurrences should again endanger the lives and property of German subjects. . . .

[Fortunately the Portuguese were quite firm in their refusal to consider allowing German Marines to land at Delagoa Bay and cross over into the Transvaal. The idea originated entirely with Marschall and was disliked even by President Kruger, who realised the awkward situation that might arise from it. (See Eckardstein, *Ten Years at the Court of St. James*, p. 85.)]

XI. 20

THE GERMANS AT PRETORIA TO THE EMPEROR, *December 31st*, 1895

Telegram.

The Germans at Pretoria unanimously beseech Your Majesty to intervene at once to prevent endless misery and bloodshed.

XI. 21

HERFF, CONSUL AT PRETORIA, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *December 31st*, 1895

Cipher telegram.

The High Commissioner at Cape Town (Sir Hercules Robinson) has formally disavowed the Chartered Company's action and ordered the troops to retire. Jameson, their leader, has however ignored the order, and 300 more troops have crossed the border. They disbelieve here in the genuineness of the disavowal and are convinced that the British Government have knowledge of the deed. A collision between the Boers and the Chartered Company is expected to-morrow. Following your instructions of December 30th, I delivered Your Highness' message to the President immediately. He was deeply moved by the extent of the German support and expressed his gratitude. The President requests me to inform Your Highness that he has done all possible to avoid provocation, but that since foreign troops have entered from Bechuanaland,—a violation of the Convention—he regrets that his Government is obliged to drive out the freebooters by force. The Transvaal Government has in fact done all that was possible in the way of concession, and this is freely admitted even by the British subjects. The Chartered Company's action, which has without doubt been undertaken with the foreknowledge and approval of the British Government, is nothing but a piece of

[1] Actually there was only one. (See p. 370.)

ruthless land-grabbing. The revolt at Johannesburg has already begun.

XI. 21–22

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO THE EMPEROR, *January 1st*, 1896

I beg leave to report that the British Ambassador handed me to-day the enclosed telegram from Lord Salisbury.[1]

I replied to the Ambassador that to my regret events seemed to have forestalled this communication, since the 'violence' which Mr. Chamberlain wished to avert had now happened, for the Chartered Company's insurgent bands had by now entered Transvaal territory under arms. I could not see how the Government of the Transvaal State could answer this breach of the peace otherwise than by driving the disturbers of the peace out of its territory by force. For two years now we had called the British Government's attention to the dangers threatening in those parts from Sir [*sic*] Cecil Rhodes' gestures, but had never received a clear answer as to the British Cabinet's attitude towards those doubtful methods. Now that yesterday's telegram from Pretoria had been received—which had been 17 hours on the way, having been probably detained somewhere—I obtained His Majesty's command to instruct Count Hatzfeldt to enquire of the British Government officially what steps it thought of taking in order to repair the breach of treaty rights and International Law committed by this incursion of armed bands into the territory of the Transvaal State. Count Hatzfeldt had telegraphed that he was to see Lord Salisbury this afternoon. I regret to see that the *Times*, which at last reported to-day the events of December 30th, was already threatening 'that England will permit no intervention in the affair, from whatever quarter it might come'. That is—England permits no intervention, but the Great Powers with rights and interests in the Transvaal are to permit the illegal intervention of Mr. Rhodes, who has nothing to gain there! Such threats from the Press only make matters worse. . . .

XI. 24

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 1st*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

I have seen Lord Salisbury, and he readily told me that the British Government, which entirely disapproved of the Raid, had at once provided the Governor of Cape Colony with suitable instructions. In obedience to these the latter had already instructed the British Resident in Bechuanaland two days ago by

[1] Cf. p. 378.

telegraph to send special messengers with the utmost despatch by two different routes to Dr. Jameson, ordering him in the name of the British Government to retire at once. At the same time certain British Officers who were believed to have joined the column which had gone out, were ordered to do the same with the added indication that non-obedience would entail very heavy punishment. Lord Salisbury added that he and the Colonial Secretary had no doubt that the orders from London would be promptly carried out.

My impression from this conversation is that the Chartered Company's action was in every way undesired by the British Government, and that it will therefore leave no stone unturned to enforce its orders in this case.

XI. 24–5

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 1st*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

Private for Baron von Holstein.

Lord Salisbury was extremely forthcoming and willingly gave me the information contained in my telegram (above). Having done this, he asked me as a friend to say nothing to him in this matter which could be construed as a threat, as that would make everything impossible for him. He added very confidentially that the Raid, of which he could assure me he did not approve, was in fact greatly disliked by him. Not only did he not wish to increase further the authority and power of Cecil Rhodes, but he also had good reason to imagine that the object of this movement was largely to found a South African-British Republic, which was naturally not wished for here.

As it seems right to assume that they are honest about the affair here, I would propose that we wait for the result of the orders that have been sent out from here.

I spoke no word to Lord Salisbury which could be taken as a threat; indeed it was not necessary, as he willingly told me everything as soon as the subject was mentioned.

XI. 25

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *January 2nd*, 1896

With reference to your telegram of the 1st, it is not my impression that Lord Salisbury fully realises the seriousness of the situation, and I believe that he hopes for greater success for his orders to the Chartered Company's force than is actually justified. When I asked Lascelles what the London Cabinet would do, if

Jameson ignored its orders, he merely shrugged his shoulders. For us the affair is of the very greatest importance, for Germany could never permit Rhodes or England to swallow up the Transvaal.

Our Consul at Pretoria has asked leave to send for a landing party from the cruiser *Seeadler* at Delagoa Bay to protect the Consulate and the Germans who have taken refuge in it, against the insurgents, and he has been empowered to do so. A landing party is not stronger than 50 men. You will say nothing to Lord Salisbury of this, unless he mentions the subject to you himself.

XI. 26

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO THE EMPEROR WILLIAM, *January 2nd*, 1896

I enclose for Your Majesty's perusal a telegram received from Herff, our Consul at Pretoria, last evening. (See below.)

The contents show that the 'strict orders' to retire from Transvaal territory, which the British Government sent to Cape Colony and the Chartered Company, and to which Lord Salisbury referred in his conversation yesterday with Count Hatzfeldt, have not been obeyed, that the Company's troops, commanded by British officers, are moving forward on Transvaal territory and have already collided with the Boers. The fact that Mr. Chamberlain and the High Commissioner have already offered to mediate between the Chartered Company and the Boers, shows that even the British Government did not expect its orders to be obeyed, but intends at the Transvaal's expense to reap the fruits of 'Sir' Cecil Rhodes' plans, which have evidently been prepared for a long time.

If, considering the state of affairs and the strong emotion felt in Germany at the Chartered Company's illegal inroad, Your Majesty's Government felt satisfied by the British Government's orders to retire and left matters to their further development, it would be showing a confidence in the British promises, for which the whole course of events does not offer sufficient grounds. Under these circumstances the Chancellor agrees with me, that the conviction, which we have constantly expressed during the last two years—that in order to uphold important German interests, the *status quo* in the Transvaal, which has been legally asserted by treaty, must remain intact—must now be communicated *officially* to the British Government.

I therefore humbly beg Your Majesty's leave to be allowed to instruct Count Hatzfeldt to hand Lord Salisbury a note to the following effect:

Supposing that the British Government's order to retire has not been obeyed, he is instructed to declare that the Imperial

Government has no intention of accepting any alteration in the legal position of the South African Republic, as secured by treaty.

German Note.

The Emperor at once telegraphed: 'Agreed'.

XI. 27

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *January 2nd*, 1896

Telegram.

Please hand to Lord Salisbury the following note forthwith:

In reply to the representations made by me in the name of the Imperial Government on January 1st, to the effect that armed bands had broken into the Transvaal from territory under British protection, and to my enquiry as to what the Government of Great Britain intended to do in the matter, you have been good enough to state that the central Government in London has ordered the interlopers to retire forthwith. Now, according to the Imperial Government's information, this order has not been obeyed. Indeed there has actually been a bloody encounter between the levies of the Chartered Company and the Boers.

In obedience to instructions given to me I have to declare that the Imperial Government protests against this action and is not minded to accept any alteration in the legal position of the South African Republic, as secured by treaty.

Please acknowledge receipt of this note.

XI. 27

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *January 2nd*, 1896

Telegram.

For your information in respect of the note to be handed to Lord Salisbury, I forward you a telegram received from Herff.

'Collision between Boers and Chartered Company still uncertain. Revolution in Johannesburg so far not violent in character. The President begs me therefore to wait at least till to-morrow before sending for landing party from the *Seeadler*, so as not to complicate the situation. Am in touch with our Consulate at Delagoa Bay. Chamberlain offers British mediation to prevent further bloodshed; also the High Commissioner, who is coming here. If collision with Chartered Company turns out unfavourably for the Boers, the Government is prepared to make certain concessions with regard to the Franchise, such as will not let the governing power out of the hands of the Boers. According to my instructions I have urged the President not to allow himself to be intimidated.'

This proves that the British Government is already beginning

to reap the fruits of the Chartered Company's action, seeing that it offers to mediate.

XI. 28

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 2nd*, 1896

Cipher telegram.[1]

I learn from a reliable source very confidentially that this Government has heard, via Pretoria, that Dr. Jameson's force has been surrounded by the Boers and has surrendered. Also that Sir Hercules Robinson has arrived at Pretoria to treat with President Kruger regarding the settlement of the affair.

XI. 29

HERFF, IN PRETORIA, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 1st*, 1896

Cipher telegram.[2]

Boers victorious in fight near Krügersdorp. Chartered Company hoisted the white flag. The President has declared to the French and Dutch Consuls and myself that the Government will demand nothing more of the High Commissioner, who arrives here to-morrow, than that he shall order the insurgents to lay down their arms. It will be well to demand in London, jointly with France and Holland, that the High Commissioner shall receive strong and clear instructions.

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 3rd*, 1896

Two cipher telegrams.

1. Telegram of January 2nd received, and a note just despatched to the Foreign Office. This will probably be in Lord Salisbury's hands to-morrow morning; he is in the country and is expected at the Foreign Office at 3 in the afternoon.

2. Additional to the above. I asked for the note, which had already gone to the Foreign Office, and received it back unopened.

XI. 30

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO THE AMBASSADORS IN ROME, PARIS AND VIENNA, *January 3rd*, 1896

Telegram.

For your information and to be communicated confidentially.[3]

[1] White-Book. Documents relating to the South African Republic, No. 19. [2] Ditto, No. 20.

[3] The last five words omitted in the Paris telegram.

Yesterday, before the news of the successful Boer resistance arrived here, Count Hatzfeldt was instructed to hand a note of protest to Lord Salisbury, declaring that the Imperial Government had no intention of accepting any alteration in the legal status of the Transvaal.

After the happy event, Count Hatzfeldt was instructed not to deliver the note, but to-day to express orally to Lord Salisbury his gratification at being relieved of the painful duty by the course events had taken.

German Note.

Both in Vienna and Rome the turn affairs had taken caused great concern.

XI. 30

COUNT ZU EULENBURG, IN VIENNA, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 4th*, 1896

Extract.

Count Goluchovski is incensed at the British raid into the Transvaal, but he sees that it means a further development of the existing Anglo-German differences in colonial matters, which will not fit in well with his policy.

I told him that such differences must be regarded as *local*, as far as possible. Though we certainly did not wish England's position as a Great Power in the Mediterranean destroyed, it must certainly be to Germany's interests to resist with energy, if the need arose, the indefinite expansion of England's sphere of power in Africa, where we had to watch over the prestige and development of our own colonies. The Minister found this standpoint quite justified. It was due, moreover, to his fine feeling that he did not see his way to intervene in England's interests in the occurrence in the Transvaal. I have never seen him cooler in matters affecting England than on this occasion.

German Note.

As regarded Italy, a memorandum by Marschall (January 11th) and a report by Bülow, in Rome (January 15th) [neither given], indicated that Baron Blanc also, however distasteful he found the disagreements between Germany and England in the Transvaal question, considered that the fault was entirely England's.

XI. 31

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO HERFF, AT PRETORIA, *January 3rd*, 1896

Telegram.

Please discuss the following confidentially with President Kruger:

The Treaty of 1884 with England restricted somewhat the Transvaal's right to conclude treaties, but does not forbid the Republic to apply to the Powers, to ask them to confer regarding the legal status of the Transvaal, and, perhaps by recognising its neutrality, to secure the country against foreign intrigues and breaches of the peace.

Germany would support such a proposal by the Transvaal. The Imperial Government does not wish to take the initiative, because President Kruger best knows his country's interests and conditions, and we do not wish to be suspected of pursuing selfish aims. Reply by telegram.

HERFF TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 4th*, 1896

Telegram.

Have spoken to the President. He favours a Conference, but thinks he should not make an official proposal, unless the requirements, which his Government has decided to submit to the High Commissioner, are not granted.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE 'KRUGER TELEGRAM' AND ITS CONSEQUENCES. JANUARY–MARCH, 1896

XI. 31

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM TO PRESIDENT KRUGER, *January 3rd*, 1896 [1]

Drafted by Kayser, of the Foreign Office (Colonial Section).
(Sent off at 11.20 a.m.)

I express my sincere congratulations that, supported by your people, without appealing for the help of friendly Powers, you have succeeded by your own energetic action against armed bands which invaded your country as disturbers of the peace, and have thus been enabled to restore peace and safeguard the independence of the country against attacks from the outside.

WILHELM I.R.

German Note.

Kayser's original draft contained the words 'the dignity of your Government'. The alteration to 'independence of the country against attacks from the outside' is in Marschall's own handwriting.

There is nothing in the records to confirm Eckardstein's statement (*Ten Years at the Court of St. James's*, p. 82), made on the authority of Admiral von Hollmann (formerly Secretary to the Admiralty), as an eye-witness of the occurrence, that at the Emperor's desire a passage was cut out in the middle, as being 'perhaps too stiff'.

There is no evidence at all of the origin of the famous telegram in contemporary records. (See Otto Hammann, *Der Neue Kurs* (1918), p. 180 et seq.; also Sir V. Chirol's account of an interview with Marschall in the *Times* of September 11th, 1920.) On the other hand, there are the Emperor's marginal remarks later on to a number of newspaper articles occasioned by the statements on the subject in Adolph Stein's *Wilhelm II*, which appeared in 1909. The Emperor described Stein's account (p. 32) as 'absolutely right and historically correct', especially his suggestion that the telegram did *not* spring from the Emperor's own initiative, but was a deeply thought out action of the Foreign Office. An assertion by the *Frankfürter Zeitung* (February 4th, 1909) that Marschall toned down the original draft in several respects, was marked by the Emperor, 'Untrue —the opposite.' This agrees with what appears in the records. At the

[1] Cf. Lee, *King Edward VII*, I, 721.

end of this article the Emperor remarks: 'Admiral von Hollmann was present at the discussion, as Secretary of State for the Admiralty. While the gentlemen were waiting for me, Marschall was boasting of the telegram he had drafted, and that the text would be a great success (*Schlager*). Hollmann is a witness to this, and also to my reluctance, and to the fact that I was outvoted by Marschall and Hohenlohe. Hollmann so far has mentioned it to no one. I have now released him from his silence, so that the truth may at last be revealed.' See also the Emperor William's full account in *My Memoirs*, 1878–1918, p. 80 et seq.

XI. 32–3

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 3rd*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

I carried out your instructions, and Lord Salisbury expressed a hope that the Transvaal question could now be considered as over. I pointed out that the British Government would do well to use some influence with the British elements at Johannesburg, so that they should abstain from further attempts at rebellion, which might bring on a fresh crisis.

According to latest news, the Prime Minister understands that the Transvaal Government has released all the prisoners except Jameson, whom they wish to try by Court Martial.

BARON VON HOLSTEIN TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *January 4th*, 1896

Private.

From the curtness of your telegram of the 3rd I get the impression that you are hiding something unpleasant. Please telegraph to me privately something to show how your conversation with Lord Salisbury went. Rest assured that our action will not be governed by our feelings and mood, in spite of pressure from the colonial party and elsewhere. But we must know where we are.

XI. 33

COUNT HATZFELDT TO GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 4th*, 1896

Telegram. Private for Baron von Holstein.

I have hidden nothing unpleasant whatever. Lord Salisbury was forthcoming, and continued to be so, when I said that I had been instructed to hand him a note, and was glad that recent events relieved me of the necessity of presenting it. He enquired about our interests in the Transvaal in detail, and I informed him, on the authority of information received from Herr Goerz,[1] that we had over 500 Millions (of Marks) of German capital invested there, and there were about 15,000 Germans in Johannes-

[1] Of Ad. Goerz, of Berlin, with branches in London and Johannesburg.

burg. He fully understood that the situation there must be of some interest for us. This time also his words showed but little sympathy for Rhodes and his ambitions, and he remarked with a certain satisfaction, that he heard that Rhodes's position seemed to be shaken. His satisfaction was evident when he said that he hoped that the whole Transvaal difficulty was now over.

I was not more explicit in my official telegram of yesterday, because I had already reported more than once on Lord Salisbury's friendly attitude. If up to yesterday there had been a change and especially if anything unpleasant had occurred, I should have felt it my duty to report at once. Moreover, it was after my meeting with Lord Salisbury that I received the text of His Majesty's congratulatory telegram, and could not help, from my knowledge of conditions here, foreseeing the effect which its inevitable publication would have, and has had, on public opinion here. All the English newspapers, with the single exception of the *Daily News*, describe the message as an act of unfriendliness towards England, and even the *Standard* speaks out sharply about it. This change is all the more striking, as, so far, the whole of the London Press, with hardly an exception, decidedly blamed Dr. Jameson's action. Whether Lord Salisbury will be able, supposing this feeling remains or even becomes more acute, to maintain fully his present attitude towards us, and whether for his own sake he will not feel obliged to act with more energy against the Boers, so as to avoid the appearance here of retreating before Germany, are questions which I cannot answer with any certainty, until I meet him again—probably on Wednesday. To-day this much appears certain. The present revulsion of public opinion, as shown in the Press to-day, makes his task of treating the question before him as far as possible in a friendly spirit considerably harder.

German Note.

By a telegram of January 2nd, Consul Herff had been ordered to communicate to Kruger an official note in regard to the steps contemplated in London by the note of January 2nd (but eventually never opened). On January 3rd an urgent cable was sent to Herff: 'Delivery of note unnecessary.' It had however been delivered already. (See p. 383.)

XI. 34–5

HERFF, AT PRETORIA, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 4th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

According to instructions I handed the note to President Kruger to-day. The Government at once acknowledged its receipt with thanks.

Dr. Jameson, with other officers and 400 troops of the Char-

tered Company in all, captured and brought to Pretoria. Transvaal Government is determined to make full use of the situation; demanding unconditional submission of the rebels in Johannesburg and, if necessary, insisting on the removal of the London Convention, which England had broken, and dismissal and punishment of Cecil Rhodes, the Prime Minister. The idea has arisen of getting the Chartered Company abolished and so breaking Rhodes's power in South Africa permanently. In pursuing this aim, the Transvaal Government realises possibility of war with England. Please tell me, for my own information, what attitude the Imperial Government and the other interested Powers, France and Holland, would adopt towards this ambition of the Transvaal Government.

The High Commissioner left Cape Town yesterday evening.

It appears that 1,000 Chartered Company's troops crossed the western border of the Transvaal, and a further thousand were waiting ready at Buluwayo.

XI. 35

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO HERFF, AT PRETORIA, *January 5th*, 1896

With reference to your telegram of the 4th.

Germany's position in the question is already given in my cable of January 3rd.

We advise strongly against demands, such as withdrawal of the Charter, or Cecil Rhodes's dismissal, as being capable of being construed as interference in the private affairs of England and provocation to war.

It is the Transvaal's interest to avoid such a war. An invitation to the Powers to confer would lessen this danger and at the same time secure the Transvaal's future position. Germany will support the proposal for the Conference, if first mooted by the Transvaal, but she cannot take the initiative all by herself, for this would make us suspected of pursuing a scheme for a protectorate. Kruger's rejection of your proposed demand for a detachment of sailors shows that this suspicion exists even amongst the Boers.

There is general sympathy for the Transvaal, and she is expected to defend her rights, but not to issue a challenge, which is bound to lead to war.

XI. 36

HERFF, AT PRETORIA, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 6th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

I have advised the Transvaal Government according to instructions. I am convinced that it will be followed, as far as

Rhodes and Charter are concerned. There is no suspicion of Germany amongst the Boers. (The EMPEROR: *'Just what I have thought and said these last few days.—So I was right!'*) On the Transvaal's demand the High Commissioner has just declared with apparent unwillingness (The EMPEROR: *'Incredible!'*) his readiness to order the British subjects in Johannesburg to lay down their arms within 24 hours unconditionally and deliver them over to the Government. (The EMPEROR: *'Good.'*) Government circles here are highly delighted at the Emperor's telegram of good wishes to the President.

XI. 36

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *January 6th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

Dr. Leyds, the Secretary of State for the Transvaal, was with me yesterday. He thanked me warmly for the sympathy which all classes in Germany have shown for the Transvaal, and especially for my telegram of congratulation. In the course of conversation Dr. Leyds told me that most of his cables were held up and also mutilated—probably on purpose. A week before he had cabled to learn where and how his wife was, but he had received no reply. The letters he had written to his wife during the last months, had all been opened before reaching their destination. The conversation then turned to industry and the Transvaal's military preparations, and I expressed admiration of the quick concentration for defence. I said that the intention of landing German sailors was aimed at protecting German lives and property in the event of fighting in the towns. Also in the event of the Republic being overpowered by the filibusters, orders had been issued here for sending military assistance first from East Africa to restore the Republic's freedom.[1] The integrity of the Transvaal was a condition *sine qua non*.

I asked Dr. Leyds if he had fresh news, and he replied—yes, very important and secret. A telegram or a report from Lisbon stated that the Portuguese had as good as promised the British the possession of Lorenzo Marques, under the appearance of compulsion. I replied that I would never allow this. If Lorenzo Marques changes hands, it should come only to Germany or the Boers. Information and instructions must be sent secretly to the Consul and also to the Commander of the German cruiser at Lorenzo Marques, at the first sign of any such intention by the British, at once to occupy the place.

[1] Cf. p. 378.

XI. 37

THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, TO THE EMPEROR WILLIAM, *January 7th*, 1896

I have had the honour to receive Your Majesty's gracious telegram regarding the Audience granted to the Secretary of State for the Transvaal.

According to confidential information, this Dr. Leyds is a distrustful man. He dislikes a German protectorate not less than a British one, because in either case the only influence, which the Netherlands exercise in the Transvaal, that of supplying the country with Dutch officials, would entirely cease. Dr. Leyds is a Dutchman. It must be assumed, therefore, that Dr. Leyds' principal object is to gain out of the present political situation advantages for the Transvaal on the strength of the 1884 Treaty, without considering whether the result may be a war between England and Germany. Germany could not enter upon such a war *in isolation*. First and foremost, therefore, it must be our diplomatic task to draw to ourselves more and more the Powers that possess similar interests, and at any rate to avoid taking steps in isolation, such as may attract friends to England.

Your Majesty has given it to be understood with great clearness that you will not allow the integrity of the Transvaal to be infringed. It will now be the duty of that State to make its own arrangements with the Powers, so as to be assured for the future against the recurrence of any similar attacks. Once the Transvaal starts to do this, she will receive the support of Your Majesty's Government. *This we must wait for.* At present any initiative on our part is out of the question, if we are to avoid the danger of being thrust forward against England more and more by France and Russia and of being left in isolation. France's attitude is highly significant. Her Government has remained passive from the start and generously left it to the German Empire to defend the rights of the Transvaal against England's aggressions.

At first the French press burst out in enthusiasm for the South African Republic and in admiration for Your Majesty's high-hearted telegram. But in 24 hours the first generous impulse died down; the French papers are already talking of Alsace-Lorraine again, and more is heard of the notion that they should wait to see how the relations between Germany and England develop, in order to secure a corresponding advantage for France.[1] This being so, we must avoid all that may drive France into England's arms, and do everything to keep them apart.

Delagoa Bay and Lorenzo Marques are extremely important to France in view of her possession of Madagascar. If England

[1] Cf. p. 396.

owns the Bay, she can in two days with her ships seize Madagascar from the French, without the French Government's hearing a word of the seizure, for there is no cable communication between France and Madagascar. If British ships take Lorenzo Marques now, Great Britain would not enjoy for long this *temporary* occupation—on which moreover she has a right of pre-emption with Portugal.

German Note.

The *Times* of January 8th in fact reported the despatch of a British squadron to Delagoa Bay. First, however, only three smaller ships were sent there from Zanzibar, arriving on the 15th. A report by Captain Gülich, Naval Attaché in London (January 13th), stated that all warships on the East Indian and South African stations were being held in readiness to be employed at Delagoa Bay. It was reported also to Berlin from Lisbon that England intended to land at Delagoa Bay. This news greatly disturbed the Emperor and caused the Foreign Office to make enquiries of Count Hatzfeldt on January 16th. Lord Salisbury categorically denied to the Ambassador on the 17th any intention of a landing or of sending more ships than had been sent already.

This occupation would be the signal for France to take an active part in the Transvaal and join with us against England. The result would be the opposite, however, if Germany seized the Bay and the town of Lorenzo Marques. England and France would at once join together against Germany (The EMPEROR: '*I*').

Hence I consider it my absolute duty, respectfully to implore Your Majesty to renounce any immediate measure, which may lead to an occupation of Lorenzo Marques by German ships.

(The EMPEROR: '*The loss of, or failure to acquire Delagoa Bay will one day be severely avenged, and we shall deeply regret it.*')

Minute by the EMPEROR at the head of the despatch:

I think differently, but I submit.

XI. 39

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *January 6th*, 1896

Telegram.

The British Ambassador mentioned to-day the unfavourable impression which His Majesty's telegram to President Kruger had made on British public opinion. I replied that I must decidedly take exception to the view adopted by the British Press, that the telegram implied hostility to England and an invasion of her rights. In the matter of rights the German was very sensitive; he had no wish to infringe foreign rights, but he demanded that his own should be respected. It could not possibly be called an act of hostility to England for the German Emperor to congratulate the Head of a friendly State on having beaten armed bands, which had entered his country illegally and had

been declared 'outlaws' by the British Government itself. Moreover, Germany had a right to speak of the independence of the South African Republic, since that had been recognised in the Convention concluded by England with that State in 1884, except for the minor restriction on Art. IV. I considered the British Press in the wrong in speaking of England's suzerainty over the South Africa Republic, after this had been formally and in essence removed by that Convention.

XI. 40

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 7th*, 1896

Private for Baron von Holstein.

. . . Lord Salisbury was very friendly to-day and assured me emphatically that there was no fear of anything further being done against the Transvaal. His chief fear was that Jameson's life was in danger, as this, so he says, would make his task here immeasurably more difficult. He expressed no wish, but I have no doubt that he would be very grateful if we would suggest moderation to Herr Kruger, or at least advise him to wait.

The very general and deep bitterness in the Press against us seems to be less to-day. I privately advised Lord Salisbury quietly to recommend the newspapers to abstain from further personal attacks on His Majesty, and he promised readily to do this.

He said that he was not yet decided whether he ought not to give expression to the views held here in answer to the Secretary of State's assertion to Lascelles, that England could claim no suzerainty over the Transvaal. I advised him against it, explaining why the claim to real suzerainty could not be completely justified. He said finally that it was best to let the question rest and only to speak of the maintenance of the *status quo*, that being a subject on which both parties were agreed.

[By the PRETORIA CONVENTION (March, 1881), 'the administration of the Transvaal passed again into Boer hands, and the British troops were withdrawn. Nominally the State was left in a position not widely differing from that of a self-governing colony. The Queen of England was its recognized Suzerain. The control of its foreign affairs was reserved to the British Government. That same Government was empowered to move troops through the territory in time of war; and careful guarantees of native interests were provided. The appointment, however, of a British Resident at Pretoria to "perform duties and functions analogous to those discharged by a Chargé d'Affaires and Consul-General," indicated that, while falling short of a completely independent Republic, the Transvaal State would be something more than a Colony with responsible government; men read between the lines of the Convention, each according to his own views and prejudices; some approved, and others interpreted

the treaty to be a skilfully worded surrender.' (Sir Charles Lucas, *The History of South Africa to the Jameson Raid*, p. 298.)

Article IV of the LONDON CONVENTION of 1884 slightly modified the claim to suzerainty, but did not, as the Boers contended, abolish it. Lord Derby, who as Colonial Secretary had concluded the Convention, denied in the House of Lords that it had ever been his intention to do so. The Republic's relations with other States still required the approval of Great Britain. The Convention also asserted the right of any persons other than natives to settle and possess houses and manufactories, etc., in the Transvaal, and to be subject only to such taxes as were imposed on citizens of the Republic. This was the Convention that was in force at the time of the Raid.]

XI. 41

BARON VON HOLSTEIN, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *January 8th*, 1896

Telegram. Private.

. . . I spoke to-day to Chirol, the *Times* Correspondent here and a friend of the Ambassador's, as follows:

'I wish earnestly that the present direct negotiations between the Transvaal and England may achieve their object. Otherwise the matter will go *very* much further. We Germans could not accept a solution which left us with nothing. It is already clear that Russia will not fail to make use of its one opportunity of exploiting Germany against England [in connection with the Armenian question]. France will be obliged to go with her, in spite of Alsace-Lorraine, because otherwise Germany would usurp France's place with Russia, and a German-Russian group would be a permanent menace to France, against which even the British Navy would be no protection.

'Taking this into consideration, I believe there will be a satisfactory solution.

'The suspicions of a German seizure of Lorenzo Marques are an absurdity. We should thereby bring the French, who set much store by this port on account of Madagascar, on to the British side.

'Up to now British, and even Conservative policy—the attempt at a flare-up on account of Armenia, the refusal over Samoa, the contemptuous treatment of the Italian proposal regarding Zeyla [1]—so long as it lasts, makes of England a useless political factor. It is very doubtful if the Transvaal experience will suffice to make England realise the necessity of maintaining connection with the Continent. Fresh doctrines and fresh personalities will, however, gradually pave the way to this realisation.'

I think that, if the present direct negotiations fail, the Transvaal will suggest a discussion by the Powers; this will lead to further developments. It is important for the world's peace that England should not go so far in her naval demonstration as to give

[1] Cf. pp. 162, 306, 338.

our navy an opportunity for mobilisation, even if only a partial one.

The Russian Ambassador declared here to-day that, by his telegram, our Emperor had spoken not for a German, but for a European interest, and deserved the greatest thanks. The Tsar has also telegraphed direct to our Emperor.

German Note.

On January 8th the British Government decided to form a flying squadron, consisting of 2 first-class battleships, and 2 first- and 2 second-class cruisers, intended to act independently or to strengthen the Channel or the Mediterranean squadrons. Further details are supplied by a report by Captain Gülich, Naval Attaché in London (January 13th, 1896). This British measure, although clearly directed against Germany, was not opposed by her. Even the new and far-reaching British naval programme of March, 1896, the first plans of which were already settled by November, 1895, and which provided for 5 battleships, 4 first-class, 3 second-class, and 6 third-class cruisers and 28 torpedo-boat destroyers, was not at once imitated by Germany. Merely for the protection of German interests overseas, the Reichstag on March 18th sanctioned three new cruisers. Not till 1897 did Germany follow England's example by introducing a programme of naval construction.

German Note.

The Emperor William II wrote to the Tsar: [1]

The political horizon is peculiar just now. Armenia and Venezuela are open questions England brought up, and now suddenly the Transvaal Republic has been attacked in a most foul way, as it seems, not without England's knowledge. I have used very severe language in London and have opened communications in Paris for common defence of our endangered interests, as French and German colonists have immediately joined hands of their own accord to help the outraged Boers. I hope you will also kindly consider the question, as it is one of principle of upholding treaties once concluded. I hope that all will come right, but come what may, I shall never allow the British to stamp out the Transvaal!

This letter is not in the Foreign Office Records. The passage referring to 'communications in Paris' did not correspond exactly with the facts (see pp. 376, 399), but it may have been despatched behind the back of the Foreign Office.

XI. 44

Count Hatzfeldt to the German Foreign Office, *January 8th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

The French Ambassador came to see me to-day and remarked in course of conversation that his impression was that, owing to certain articles in the French Press, the British were counting on France's sympathy or else on complete reserve on her part in the Transvaal question. This assumption did not correspond entirely with his observations in Paris, whence he had just returned after

[1] W. Goetz, *Briefe Wilhelms II an den Zaren*, 1894–1914, p. 300.

discussions with several leading personages there. They have certainly not been able to settle anything definite, and it might therefore perhaps be well for him to remind the British statesmen that they had better not commit any hasty action, relying on complete reserve on France's part.

I agreed with this view, and Baron de Courcel then asked with keen interest whether Russia had pronounced in favour of our view. The Russian Ambassador here was unfortunately without any information.

If I could declare to the French Ambassador that the Russian Government recognised our view as correct, I should probably be able to induce him more easily to speak to Lord Salisbury, as he suggests. It would assuredly not be without its effect here.

German Note.

Count Hatzfeldt telegraphed on January 12th that Baron de Courcel had in fact said to Lord Salisbury that he was unwilling to mix in an affair which did not concern him directly, but he thought he ought to point out that in France the Government's decision depended on public opinion, and that if the Transvaal question assumed a European character, it could not be foreseen what line the French Government would take under pressure of public opinion.

Also in a report of May 22nd, 1896, Count Hatzfeldt quoted de Courcel's retrospective words regarding his action in the Transvaal question: 'He reminded me that he then promised me, though he had not received instructions to that effect, to say to Lord Salisbury that the British Cabinet would do well not to conclude from the expressions used by some of the French papers, which seemed to favour the British point of view, that it could count on the further decisions of the French Government or on its permanent reserve with regard to the crisis in the Transvaal. He had, as I knew, kept his promise to me.'

The declarations which Baron de Courcel claimed to have made to the British Government, certainly did not hinder him from trying, at the same time, to make use of the Anglo-German differences to promote a French rapprochement with England.

XI. 46

Count Hatzfeldt to the German Foreign Office, *January 9th*, 1896

. . . What I should have to know regarding the direct negotiations between England and the Transvaal, is whether they concern merely the already known concessions to the Uitlanders, or whether the Transvaal is making political demands, i.e., recognition of independence and removal of Article IV. This would greatly complicate the situation, for I do not think that the Government here would have the courage to accept so definite a condition, which might be construed by the excited public opinion as a political defeat for England. We equally cannot accept any solution, which would leave us with nothing, and it is merely a

question whether this would be the case if the Transvaal and England agreed together direct to maintain the *status quo*. It is very important for me to be clearly informed, in view of my further discussions with Lord Salisbury.

I am to see him on Saturday, and shall do my best to call his attention to the danger of too far-going demonstrations. But it is very important that we do not make counter-demonstrations too hastily.

Better and more practical than the Russian Ambassador's declarations about the telegram, would be an instruction to the Russian Ambassador here, to inform Lord Salisbury that Russia shares our views, and a word by the French Ambassador to say that they should count less confidently here on France's abstention. The Frenchman would certainly do this, as soon as it is known in Paris that Russia wishes it, and will support it.

[The Concessions to the Uitlanders, referred to above, were promised, but never carried out. On the contrary, the President's policy of increased oppression of the Uitlanders led directly to the Boer War of 1899.]

XI. 47

Baron von Marschall to Count Hatzfeldt, *January 9th*, 1896

Telegram.

In reply to your private telegram of to-day.

Our only recent information on the negotiations between England and the Transvaal comes from you. The Consul in the Transvaal sends no more reports and is not pressed by us to do so, for we consider that we have done what is required of us, if by our support, so far only moral, the Transvaal is enabled to conclude a decent agreement with England—based on the *status quo*. We never demanded more than that, as you will have gathered from the account of my conversation with Sir Edward Malet.[1] We do not wish to mix in these direct negotiations at all. If they fail, and the Transvaal applies to the Powers, they will group themselves together in the course of the discussions. We are waiting for President Kruger to begin and shall not ourselves move in the matter with the other Powers beforehand. If the discussions take place, our programme will be limited to the two words *status quo*.

It is understandable that Russia is doing nothing to warn London, as it would be greatly to her interest that the Transvaal question should grow into a war now, in which Germany and Russia would be fighting on the same side.

[1] Cf. p. 366.

XI. 48

BARON VON HOLSTEIN TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *January 10th*, 1896

Telegram.

Private for you. A small White Book (*Aktenstücke betreffend die Südafrikanische Republik*) is soon to appear, which will show that we have been for the *status quo* only from beginning to end. The *status quo* seems now to be assured. To free the Boers from the Treaty would be to open up a new subject. As regards full freedom of trade for us, we must wait and see what happens later. Apart from the despatch to Count Münster, which you know of, and in which he was especially told to make no use of it, as regarded the Transvaal, we have given nothing about the Transvaal to any Ambassador but yourself, so as to avoid the suspicion of seeking to arouse feeling and support outside.

German Note.

In spite of Eckardstein's positive assertion (*Ten Years, etc.*, p. 86), it is obvious that Count Münster was never instructed to make enquiries in Paris, as to whether France would eventually be willing to help Germany in a war against England, which might possibly be going to break out. (Cf. p. 376.)

Undoubtedly we should, if at the eleventh hour the whole of the British possession comes under consideration as material for compensation, be able to offer Russia and France a sufficient reward for their assistance. But you and I agree that the destruction of England's power would be a doubtful advantage for Germany.

Let us be happy therefore, if the affair ends as it seems to be doing—with a small diplomatic success for Germany and a little lesson in politics for England.

German Note.

On January 12th, in fact, Hatzfeldt was requested to give his opinion on the advisability of publishing certain documents in this White Book. He asked that the passage at the end of the telegram sent to him on January 6th (p. 393), which referred to the suzerainty question, should be cut out. On January 14th, he telegraphed: 'What I wish to avoid is fresh fuel for public opinion, and its possible reaction on the Government; i.e., it might be forced to protest against our reading of the law, to affirm its claim to suzerainty officially, and to deal with the Transvaal accordingly.'

After account had been taken of this and other advice from the Ambassador, and an agreement with the British Government had been reached regarding publication, the White Book mentioned by Holstein appeared on February 12th. The original numbers on the documents were preserved in the printing, from which it is evident that the White Book was published in an altered and abridged form, thus proving that attention was paid to the feelings of the British Government. A British Blue Book, *South African Republic*, appeared at the same time.

XI. 49

HERFF, AT PRETORIA, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 9th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

Chamberlain has telegraphed to the President that he holds to the Convention of 1884. The President replies that he regrets the infringement of the Convention. He informs me that Leyds was empowered yesterday to suggest calling a European Conference. Please inform me as to success of this step, and also whether it is advisable for the Republic to declare the Convention nul and void now, or to wait till the Conference is summoned. Disarming of Johannesburg presents difficulties. So far only 3 Maxims and 2,000 rifles, with ammunition, have been given up. Government is taking steps to compel delivery of all arms, and is rejecting the High Commissioner's proposals regarding removal of the grievances of the Johannesburgers. The High Commissioner is showing annoyance. The Government hopes that he departs to-day.

XI. 49

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 10th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

I am quite certain that, if the Transvaal, by itself, denounces the Convention, the British Government will be forced by public opinion, here and at the Cape, to oppose it, and to hold firmly to its declarations and in the end to make good its point by force. The Transvaal would then find itself face to face with the official power of England, instead of, as hitherto, with a handful of adventurers, who were disavowed here. The chauvinists here would be delighted, if some incautious action by the Transvaal gave England an opportunity of repairing the humiliation to her prestige suffered in the person of Jameson, and of attaining, at the same time, the object pursued by Mr. Rhodes and 'Mr.' Jameson, the subjection and final incorporation of the Transvaal.

I do not think that the British would take part in a Conference just now, if the other Powers were to consent to one in deference to the Transvaal's proposals. It would then be a question whether all the Powers would go so far as to join in a Conference, in which England refused to take part, and to carry out any of its decisions.

My impression from all Lord Salisbury's utterances so far is that he has avoided laying too much official stress on the question of suzerainty, so as not to provoke a controversy, which might cut off his retreat. For the same reason, as far as I can judge,

he would agree to maintain the *status quo*, if an understanding with the Transvaal can be reached on this basis. If the latter will only show some willingness with regard to the Johannesburg grievances, it could by this means win security against a repetition of any attacks from the Chartered Company's territory; also very likely a money indemnity for the financial sacrifice occasioned by the Jameson Raid. Though here they will not consent to abolish the Charter entirely, as will certainly be suggested, it may yet be assumed that the Company's rights will be so far diminished, as to make military enterprises against other States, without the foreknowledge of the British Government, impossible in future.

XI. 50–1

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 11th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

Lord Salisbury has just assured me that President Kruger has mentioned no political conditions, and that the High Commissioner is soon to depart. The only difficulty still apparently to be got over, in restoring order in the Transvaal, is the surrender of arms in Johannesburg. The Committee there probably boasted at first that it possessed many more arms than it really had, and the Transvaal Government concludes that only a small portion has been surrendered. This difficulty can be got over, since the Transvaal Government is free to search the houses in the town. Lord Salisbury does not like the President Kruger's demand that the prisoners, including Dr. Jameson, shall be transferred to England.

He evidently fears that an ovation will be prepared, and also that the legal considerations will make it very difficult here to get the individual prisoners condemned in the Criminal Courts. The Minister showed to-day that he agreed that it would be best to maintain the *status quo*, and not to enter into a controversy over the suzerainty, which is claimed by England. He added that the Government would not withdraw the Charter from the Company, but would impose such restrictions as would prevent raids into the Transvaal from the Company's territory ever happening again.

XI. 80

COUNT MÜNSTER, IN PARIS, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *January 16th*, 1896

The feeling in England, for the moment so hostile to us, and the extraordinary outburst of fury in the British Press have aroused malicious joy here and given rise to hopes.

At first, the French Press maintained a watching attitude and expected the British Press to meet it half-way.

I enclose to-day's leading article in the *Temps*. It may be considered as semi-official. It points out not only the attempt at a rapprochement by a part of the British papers, but also that they would gladly entertain such an idea here. One can read between the lines that the French Government is hoping to negotiate in that sense. This is not being done in Paris. Lord Dufferin is not in sympathy with the present Government and, like all the rest of us, hardly ever sees M. Bertelot. He never speaks of him except as 'the old chemist',[1] and has a very poor opinion of him as Foreign Minister. The attempt at a rapprochement is being conducted by de Courcel, the Ambassador, in London. Certain English friends have informed me of this fact. They say that in semi-official circles in London M. Bertelot is considered to be the cleverest and most distinguished Minister of the French Republic. (The EMPEROR: '*Very suspicious.*') This 'distinction' can only mean that he and the Ambassador are trying to flatter them and win them over. (The EMPEROR: '*Correct.*')

I do not think much of these attempts at rapprochement in themselves, but they certainly should be watched. When it comes to real business, I think these gentlemen will quickly find that the British will be less compliant than they now imagine.

XI. 81

It is very likely that there will be an understanding in Siam and on the Mekong, but not in the East, and particularly not in Egypt. (The EMPEROR: '*Correct.*') The less value the new school of British politicians attaches to Constantinople and the Straits question, the more important become Egypt, the Suez Canal, Arabia and a dominating position in the Red Sea. There the French will find a *noli me tangere* attitude, and there French interests and, indeed, French vanity count for much. (The EMPEROR: '*Correct.*')

[The Anglo-French Convention, January 15th, 1896, agreed to neutralise the central portion of Siam, the fertile basin of the River Me Nam, which is the richest and most populous part of the country. This does not include the provinces bordering on the French possessions, nor on those of the Malay Peninsula, nor is the King of Siam's full sovereignty over those provinces impaired. Siam is therefore practically a buffer State, whose independence is guaranteed by England and France.]

German Note. XI. 60

. . . This Agreement was followed by much talk in the British papers of a rapprochement between England and France, which was treated with reserve in the French Press, on account of the Egyptian question.

[1] He had been a professor of Chemistry.

The nearer the Turkish Empire is to a collapse, the more Russian influence will increase and spread there, and likewise the importance of the Mediterranean, and especially of Egypt, will increase for England. The break-up of Turkey would make Mohamedanism the most important question for the British in India. The idea of shifting the religious centre from Constantinople to Arabia, and causing a Khalif to be chosen by the Shereefs at Mecca, and of keeping him there or in some other Arabian town far removed from European influence, is one which should prove more and more attractive in England and even amongst the Musulmans.

For realising such schemes and for controlling the way to India through the Mediterranean, naval predominance in the Mediterranean is above all essential. (The EMPEROR: *'This is the alleged reason for the new Flying squadron, whose appearance would otherwise have made a great sensation. Now, with the excuse of the Transvaal—"made in Germany", it looks quite harmless and natural, and can strengthen the Mediterranean squadron without molestation. The British ought to thank me for it right heartily, instead of abusing me.'*) The naval preparations are meant for use against America, although the danger from there is less than it appeared a short time ago.[1] I trust that we are only an excuse. If tempers become calmer, and the Russians and French realise the real purpose of these preparations, the thoughts of alliance and the hopes which politicians on both sides may now cherish, will disappear again. (The EMPEROR: *'Correct.'*) But we must not underestimate the dangers underlying this very complicated situation and must keep our eyes open.

(The EMPEROR: *'Very good! I quite agree with Münster. Inform him of my approval.'*)

XI. 53

COUNT HATZFELDT TO BARON VON HOLSTEIN, *January 21st*, 1896

Private letter.

There is nothing new to report, and if no fresh incident happens, it is perhaps to be hoped that the excitement on both sides will gradually die down.

Here meanwhile we have to do with an entirely altered situation, as you will have perceived from the manifestations of the British Press. It is not a question of annoyance on the part of the Government, but of a deep-seated bitterness of feeling among the public, which has shown itself in every way. I am assured that when the excitement was at its height, Germans in the City could do hardly any business with the English. In the best known large Clubs, such as the Turf, there was extreme

[1] On account of the Venezuelan question.

bitterness; I myself received many insulting and threatening letters.

I have no doubt that the general feeling was such that if the Government had lost its head or had wished for war for any reason, it would have had the whole of public opinion behind it. The suggestion that we could make real trouble for England in other parts of the world counted for absolutely nothing amongst the ignorant mass of the people. England's alleged isolation made no impression. They boasted proudly of it and felt that England was strong enough to defy all her enemies.

I set all this down, because we must reckon with conditions as they are here now, and consider the effect it may have on the British Government. We *must* not ignore the fact that no Government here—even the present one which is so strong in Parliament—is, or thinks it is able, to set itself against public opinion, when it is shown with a certain intensity. Especially must we reflect that the most serious considerations of foreign policy will never deter any British Government from looking after its interests and self-preservation, before all else. In fact, I once told Salisbury that it seemed to me to be the Government's duty to lead public opinion. He replied that this was harder here than I appeared to imagine.

What is certain is that there has been no attempt to instruct public opinion. It still imagines, therefore, that the British suzerainty over the Transvaal is incontestable, that we intervened out of pure ill-will to England, and that this is doubly unforgivable, considering all the friendship that England has shown us.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that, in face of this feeling, Salisbury did not lose his head, but maintained his conciliatory attitude towards myself in the belief that time would bring calmness.

German Note.

This retrospective remark of Hatzfeldt's, which entirely agrees with his preceding reports, shows how utterly wrong is Georges Pagès' assertion, re-hashed by him in his *Rapport de la Commission d'Enquête sur les faits de la Guerre* (I, 266)—that the British Government rejected very sharply the German overtures in the Transvaal question, and that the Emperor William had preferred ' s'humilier plutôt que de risquer une déclaration de la guerre à laquelle Lord Salisbury semblait résolu '. The idea that Germany made excuses for her conduct in the Transvaal question was officially denied as early as January 14th, 1896, by the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*; and on February 13th Baron von Marschall declared in the Reichstag that Germany's relations with England had never for one moment ceased to be good, normal and friendly.

[In other words, Marschall had realised a little late in the day the possible consequences of the rash and ill-considered telegram which he had drafted.]

But I think we must not doubt for a moment that Salisbury

has also considered the alternative possibilities and wishes to be prepared, in case either there may be a break with us, or—as he thinks more probable, if not certain—Germany may start a policy decidedly anti-British, and that he is drawing nearer and nearer to Russia, and perhaps also to France, and considers that sooner or later the Triple Alliance will fall apart. The naval preparations, which formerly we should have welcomed, are but a symptom that here they expect difficult times, perhaps as early as this spring, and wish to be prepared for all possibilities. This evident wish for a rapprochement with France is more serious. Recently I mentioned to Lord Salisbury in joke this new affection for France, which must be rather strange to him, and he took up the joke and said that they were only following our example, and did not deny that better relations with France would not be unwelcome.

We now came to the demands regarding Egypt, which were cropping up again in the French Press, and Salisbury said that *England could in the end do without Egypt*, and that he himself had *always* been *against* occupying the country! I went no further, so as to avoid showing special interest, and therefore did not point out the discrepancy with all his former utterances.

German Note.

On January 9th, 1896, Baron de Courcel suggested to Count Hatzfeldt a Franco-German understanding regarding the hinterland of Togoland. Germany on her side was ready to negotiate in sympathy, as soon as the French should raise the question officially. But it was not until the spring of 1897 that the negotiations were proceeded with.

I will here quote a very confidential remark of de Courcel's. When we mentioned the Togo Hinterland, he went further and proceeded to point out that France and Germany might in future be able to agree on several subjects. He added: 'Pour le moment nous sommes grands amis avec la Russie. Mais cela ne durera peutêtre pas éternellement.'

If de Courcel is not the only Frenchman who holds this view, which I naturally did not discuss further, and if the British give way over Egypt and let it be known in Paris, they might perhaps consider there whether the stretched out hand should not be grasped. No one can promise us that Russia would certainly oppose such a combination, if she sees that she can only hold France in her hands at this price. But if she does oppose it, and the Franco-Russian friendship becomes looser, we might live to see an *Entente Cordiale* of the Western Powers—new edition. Public opinion here, owing to the Transvaal affair, would just now be sympathetic to such a solution as this one. This can be foreseen almost with certainty.

Salisbury and I spoke of the anti-German attitude of the British Press and the desire of a part of it for a rapprochement

with France. I remarked that it was very curious that the papers did not point out the price to be paid for that rapprochement, and with how little (Togoland, etc.) it had been possible to satisfy us. He replied with vehemence that he had never been able to justify the Volta settlement, i.e., the renunciation of a territory which England had bought for cash from Denmark 50 years before, but he did not deny that this rapprochement with France or Russia would cost a great deal more. It is certain that this consideration counts greatly with him ; but it will not stop him from *trying* to make himself secure in any case and to ascertain at what price, if any, the understanding would be possible, supposing the Triple Alliance dissolves and we lean more and more towards an anti-British policy.

I think it my duty to mark these possibilities, though I may assume that they are already well known, and that we have made up our minds on the policy to be pursued to meet them. If it really comes to this, I think we shall be able to take up the idea of the Three-Emperor Alliance again. If Russia is willing to do this, even to the extent of giving up France, we may have to fear that Austria will resist to the utmost having to entertain the notion, which must involve now, at any rate, Austria's allowing Russia a free hand in the East.

If I had to give my vote, I should say that it is not to our interest either to let the British power be destroyed or to drive England into the arms of France. In my humble opinion we must keep this before us under all circumstances, and at any rate so long as Russia and France hold together, and this, as far as we can judge now, will last a long time yet. Now that we have shown our teeth over the Transvaal, it is our task once again to restore calm so far as we can without giving up our principles, and to keep the *same* attitude in the great political questions as we did before this occurrence, i.e., to bind ourselves in no direction for the future, so long as neither events nor combinations intervene to *force* us to take up a position, at the same time allowing us to ensure our own security and advantage.

XI. 56–7

[Baron von Holstein prepared a Memorandum setting forth Germany's complaints against the present tendencies of British policy. He had intended at first to send it to Count Hatzfeldt direct.]

German Note.

. . . But on further consideration, he gave up the idea of sending it to London and chose Szögyèny, the Austrian Ambassador, instead of Hatzfeldt to be the intermediary for bringing his conception to the British Ambassador's knowledge, and so to that of the British Government. This method recommended itself also, as it might help to dissipate Count Goluchovski's fears regarding the Anglo-German tension.

[The result of this arrangement is described below.]

XI. 59

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON MARSCHALL, *February 22nd*, 1896

Our position towards England and the growing suspicion, which the attitude of the British Government and Press are forcing on us, was frankly communicated yesterday morning to the Austrian Ambassador. On the same afternoon, he had, as indeed could hardly be expected otherwise, a conversation with the British Ambassador, which is alleged to have been brought about by chance.

Sir Frank Lascelles' most important utterance was his question whether Herr von Szögyény believed there was still any idea in the German Cabinet that Germany and England could ever be brought to pull together in future.

Herr von Szögyény answered with the principal arguments which had been supplied to him by the Foreign Office a few hours earlier, in particular that, in spite of several minor disagreements, Germany had until recently held fast to the view that in any great future conflict England would be forced by her own interests on to the anti-French, i.e., the German side. But in the last six weeks this view, which had been a basic principle of German policy, had been shaken by England's attitude. England had passed over President Cleveland's Message to Congress [1] and had answered it with soft words and material concessions. The Anglo-French Siam Treaty bore witness to a similar conciliatory feeling towards France. The whole bitterness of British sentiment was directed against Germany. Though the German Emperor's telegram was in point of brusqueness far behind the Cleveland Message, it had been magnified into an insult, for which hardly any atonement was possible. Germany was beginning to think that the whole Transvaal question was nothing but an excuse for paying off other scores against Germany, mainly commercial. The German Government refused to believe it possible that serious British politicians attributed to it a scheme for planting itself at Delagoa Bay, between Madagascar and British territory. In this temper Germany was following very attentively the Egyptian question,[2] which was now apparently springing to life again. If, even in that part of the world, England was not hesitating to make sacrifices for the sake of a rapprochement with France, it would be taken in Berlin as a clear proof that England was ready to pay any price in order to have her hands free against Germany; and she would then lose no time in drawing her conclusions from these premises.

The British Ambassador declared to the Austrian Ambassador that he knew nothing of any Egyptian negotiations, and he could

[1] Cf. p. 374. [2] Cf. p. 415.

not imagine that in London they would enter on any such just now.

XI. 61

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *March 15th*, 1896

Though for a number of years my personal relations with the Prime Minister have been intimate, and I am thus able to say many things, which he takes as being meant in a friendly and purely personal spirit, yet, as things are, I could not think it right, by any ill-considered words, to make it appear as if we were longing to be reassured regarding Lord Salisbury's future policy. (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*') And I think I ought now to mention that the irritation against us, which resulted from the complications in South Africa, has not yet quite subsided; it appears even in Lord Salisbury, who otherwise takes an objective view of the affair, and he does not always speak to me with the frankness to which I have been accustomed for years. This was still more marked in other British statesmen, and I might mention that the First Lord of the Admiralty, Goschen, who is a personal friend, has so far avoided a meeting, although I let my wish for one be made known to him. (The EMPEROR: '*?*') I should not think it advisable to have any conversation with Mr. Chamberlain who is very prominent just now, although I know him well, for his views are pretty stiff. He has no particular sympathy with Germany or her policy, and an exchange of views between us would only lead to a further sharpening of existing differences.

Under these circumstances I hope that Your Highness will approve of my having lately maintained a certain reserve in dealing with the British statesmen, as I thought right for the above reasons. (The EMPEROR: '*Yes.*') My Austrian and Italian colleagues, who have not the same reasons for caution, have kept me informed all the time of their observations.

I have had another special reason, which I ought to mention, for being rather cautious in my speech with the Prime Minister. It is a peculiarity of his character that he is afraid of any pressure and draws within himself, the more he thinks that one is trying to persuade him to do what he does not like. I have therefore made it a rule, in the interests of the case, to avoid giving him that impression, and have more than once had the satisfaction of seeing him come to meet me of himself and start discussing matters which he would certainly have avoided, had I pressed him.

Finally Your Highness might allow me to mention another saying of the Prime Minister's in our last conversation, which I think not uninteresting. He said that he had heard with satisfaction that we considered the restoration of our former friendly

and confidential relations with England desirable, and that he shared this wish in every way. He had recently written in this sense to Sir Frank Lascelles, adding that he did not believe the offence was his, if there had been a passing difference.

German Note.

. . . Lord Salisbury's letter (to Sir F. Lascelles, of March 13th, the object of which was to explain and justify England's policy, especially in the Armenian question) closed, according to Lascelles, with the repeated wish for mutual friendly relations with Germany. Although the irritation caused by the Kruger telegram lasted for a long time, Lord Salisbury's letter may be regarded as the conclusion of the tension between the two Governments. . . .

On this I reminded the Minister, as I had often told him, that in many ways, such as his Armenian policy, he had given cause for a certain amount of perplexity as to his political aims. (The EMPEROR: '*Correct.*') Lord Salisbury replied that he well knew we had felt a certain amount of suspicion of him, and that *arrière-pensées* had been ascribed to him which were quite foreign to his thoughts. It had been a matter of frequent experience to him that abroad, where England's domestic politics and the relations between her political parties were little understood, they completely mistook the attitude adopted by the British Cabinet in individual foreign questions and the reasons for it. If I would ask him why he had done this or that, for instance in the Armenian question which I had mentioned, he could in three words give me an exhaustive and perfectly true reason—*parceque je n'ai pas envie de perdre ma majorité.* If other underlying reasons were sought for, which could not be brought into harmony with British foreign policy which only considered the near future, and then only with reference to the political situation at home,—the explanation must be unfamiliarity with the conditions under which a British Cabinet was able to govern.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE NEAR EAST AND EGYPT, 1896. THE DONGOLA EXPEDITION

[The preoccupation of the Triple Alliance, and especially of Germany, was to remove the impression made on British public opinion by the Emperor's telegram to President Kruger. Lord Salisbury, working with Hatzfeldt, had contrived to modify its effects to some extent; but the Triple Alliance had lost much of its attraction for the British people. The Emperor's fear now was that England would join the Franco-Russian group against the Triple Alliance; his whole political outlook was coloured by it. Lord Salisbury, on the other hand, did not fear isolation, as the Continental Powers considered that he should. His refusal, therefore, to renew the Mediterranean Agreement of 1887 led the Triple Alliance Powers to conclude that he was about to join the rival camp. The same feeling is illustrated by the German relief, when Russia and France[1] attempted to place difficulties in the way of the Dongola Expedition, when the question of financing it was discussed.]

X. 229

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *December 12th*, 1895

Cipher telegram. Secret.

The Italian Ambassador tells me in strict confidence that he mentioned to Lord Salisbury yesterday Baron Blanc's proposal for an exchange of ideas said to be connected with the secret Agreement of 1887.[2] Without formally rejecting the idea, Lord Salisbury pointed out that an exchange of ideas of this sort would amount to a kind of conference between the interested Powers and could not be kept secret. Just now also it would further increase the suspicion, which existed in any case in St. Petersburg against England.

The Austrian Ambassador, who clearly knows nothing of the Italian démarche, himself informed me to-day very confidentially that Count Goluchovski (Austrian Foreign Minister), as appears from a private letter which arrived to-day, no longer attaches much value to a mere confirmation of the former secret Agreement between Austria and England, because its conditions were to

[1] Cf. p. 425. [2] Cf. Vol. I, p. 356.

some extent too vague and incomplete. Count Deym added, however, that before any step was taken here to extend or define the Agreement, Count Goluchovski meant to discuss the matter personally with him, the Ambassador, in Vienna.

Count Deym's words show that he assumes that an exchange of ideas, based on the Anglo-Austrian Agreement, is meant to apply to *one* definite event only—i.e., supposing a third Power (which can only mean Russia) entered Constantinople *with the Sultan's connivance*, Constantinople should be occupied by the three Powers, who would have conferred beforehand in contemplation of this event. As far as I am acquainted with the secret Agreement, Count Deym's interpretation can only refer to No. 8 of the note accompanying the despatch of December 10th, 1887.[1]

Count Deym showed little hope that Lord Salisbury would consent to extend the Agreement, and allowed me to observe that in Vienna, if anything came of it, great value would be attached to an engagement undertaken by the three Powers to abstain from pursuing their own advantage in Turkey. This must mean that a partition of Turkey is to be precluded.

XII. 3

PRINCE VON RADOLIN, IN ST. PETERSBURG, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 16th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

Prince Lobanoff visited me to-day and said quite spontaneously that the British Chargé d'Affaires [2] had been instructed by his Government to make to him the curious proposal to place the Sultan under the tutelage of the Powers, and at the same time to put all Turkish State dealings under European control. Prince Lobanoff clung to his contention that the Sultan must before all things be given time and opportunity to bring about an improvement himself, and he looks on the British proposal, which evidently comes from Sir Philip Currie, merely as a fresh humiliation for the Sultan. He said that this was the very first suggestion that had come to him from England recently. He said expressly the ' very first ', in order to show that England had so far made no suggestion to him at all.

He declared definitely that Russia intended to hold to the *status quo* in Turkey. Later in the conversation Prince Lobanoff repeated that, as he had often told me, Russia would not allow herself to be dragged into any occupation of Armenian districts, since this would only serve England's selfish aims. . . .

[1] Cf. Vol. I, p. 357.

[2] W. E. Goschen.

XI. 95

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 22nd*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

In strict confidence and of his own accord, the Austrian Ambassador (Count Deym) informed me that Count Goluchovski wished to renew, with improvements, the former secret Agreement with Lord Salisbury, and that he felt certain that we should not stand in its way. Count Deym is empowered to open the question with the Prime Minister, but fears that the moment is not well chosen, and he will probably postpone the suggestions in question for a while.

[The Agreement referred to was the Mediterranean Agreement of 1887.]

THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *January 23rd*, 1896

Telegram. Secret.

All our experiences of the last few months with the Salisbury Cabinet cause me to consider that the attempt to induce England to come to a binding agreement in view of a war, will be fruitless. On the strength of our latest observations, I might imagine that if England sees no opening for herself elsewhere, she may take the initiative herself. But as long as she continues to hope that by skilful handling of the Balkan question she will drive the Continental Powers into war, whilst maintaining her own freedom of action, she will pay no attention to overtures by Austria or Italy. For your personal guidance alone I would remark that some weeks ago the Russian Ambassador here declared that Lord Salisbury had intimated to St. Petersburg that a suggestion of joint action in the East had been made to him by Italy, but that he had replied that action must be by the six Powers together.

In order to prevent Lord Salisbury, by similar declarations in St. Petersburg, from making our position equivocal, I beg Your Excellency to avoid any appearance of playing the part of mediator in any movement by Austria or Italy as the case may be, towards concluding a Mediterranean alliance. You should also tell your Austrian colleague, when he mentions the matter, that His Majesty's Government does not believe that the moment has yet come, when England will assume the burden of an alliance, that we nevertheless naturally recognise that our friends of the Triple Alliance are perfectly free to act in this matter, which does not touch the Triple Alliance, and that we hold ourselves bound as much as ever by the engagements of the Triple Alliance, which are, after all, not aggressive, but defensive in nature.

XII. 11

RADOLIN, IN ST. PETERSBURG, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *February 6th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

Prince Lobanoff to-day expressed to me much satisfaction at Lord Salisbury's attitude towards the Russian reply, which rejected the last British proposal. M. de Staal's report stated that Lord Salisbury said that he, as well as Prince Lobanoff, only considered Turkey's good. His proposal was made from this point of view. He wished, before everything, to act in agreement with the Powers, and as Russia did not consider the suggested means suitable, he would gladly withdraw his proposal in order to please Russia.

German Note.

In consequence of the British failure to bring up the question of reforms on an important scale, the question rested for nearly nine months. Speaking at Dover on August 15th, 1896, Lord Salisbury expressed a decided disinclination to take further action:

['I do not hold that I have pledged my country to go to war. . . . When I say that there is a gangrene in the extremity of Europe, do not assume that I am making any implication that I intend to volunteer in the rôle of a physician to cut it out. On the contrary, I do not think it probable that Her Majesty's Government will do anything to depart from that unity of action, which seems to be prescribed by the Treaty of Paris. But not the less danger exists and will continue. There is a centre of rottenness, from which disease and decay may spread to healthier portions of the European community, and therefore, as long as this state of things exists in South-Eastern Europe, I earnestly pray that the wisdom of the other Powers may see some means to abate the danger that has existed too long. So long as it exists we must not imagine to ourselves that the danger of a disturbed equilibrium in the European atmosphere has entirely passed, and that we may not be called upon to go to the front and take part in the perils, in dealing with which our ancestors acquired so much glory and made England what she is. . . .'] [1]

At the end of August a fresh outbreak of Armenian massacres, which again violently stirred British public opinion, forced the British Government from its temporary reserve.

XI. 99

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *February 8th*, 1896

Secret.

The Austrian Ambassador, who had asked for an interview, has just been to see me. He opened the conversation with the remark that he had a highly confidential communication to make to me, and that he must ask me to promise not to report on it by telegraph. He had only to-day written about it to Vienna,

[1] *The Times*, August 16th, 1896.

whence we should undoubtedly receive information. But he must personally insist that the Imperial Government should not hear of it from me, until Count Goluchovski had received his report.

The Ambassador then continued:

'I have come to tell you that you were entirely right in your judgment of the situation here and the prospect of an understanding with the British Government. The result of a second conversation with Lord Salisbury has convinced me that the Prime Minister is not thinking of entering into any engagements with us regarding the East more extensive than those contained in the former secret Agreement. Thus we must, before everything, give full value to Lord Salisbury's assurance that he would oppose any occupation of Constantinople by the Russians, and that jointly with Italy, whose willingness could be reckoned on, he would oppose free passage for the Russian fleet from the Black Sea into the Mediterranean. Lord Salisbury pointed out, however, that the attitude of public opinion in England for some time past, with respect to Turkey, would not permit him to enter into an engagement to protect Constantinople against the Russians. Touching the Straits question, the Minister remarked that forcing the Dardanelles with a British or an Anglo-Italian fleet, once comparatively easy, might now perhaps turn out to be extremely difficult, especially if they were already occupied and defended by the Russians. The Prime Minister also reminded me that he had formerly decided on the principle that England could admit certain concessions to the Russians regarding the Straits, on condition that equal rights were granted to the other Powers,—including also the British fleet; so that whilst the Russian fleet could run without hindrance from the Black Sea into the Mediterranean, the British fleet could likewise run into the Black Sea.'

Not content, however, continued the Ambassador, with refusing an extension of the former Agreement in these two points, Lord Salisbury had astonished the Ambassador by saying pretty plainly that he attached much less meaning to the engagements which England had undertaken under the existing Agreement than they had done in Vienna. Also I had been quite right in maintaining to him, Count Deym, that the British Prime Minister's view was that the 1887 Agreement merely stated a general point of view, engaging the British Government to enter upon a fresh exchange of ideas with Austria, if need be. . . .

German Note.

Neither in Berlin nor elsewhere is there evidence in the contemporary records for the view held later in Vienna, that the British secession from the *Entente à trois* was caused by the bitterness over the Kruger telegram

and was directed not so much against Austria and Italy as against their ally, Germany. Rather had Lord Salisbury, in his letter to Sir Frank Lascelles early in March, laid it down as a fundamental principle, that England should never give a promise binding her to go to war in any future event whatever. See Marschall's memorandum of March 13th (p. 424).

XI. 102

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON HOLSTEIN, *February 16th*, 1896

Regarding Anglo-Austrian relations, Count Goluchovski appears to be unwilling to confide to us the secret that Lord Salisbury has firmly rejected for the present the Austrian proposal to institute more definite *pourparlers* between England and Austria on the Eastern question. The British Minister seems to have used all sorts of expressions, so as to leave hopes that the door may be open at a future date. Now Count Goluchovski is clinging to this hope.

We also consider that, no matter what Government may be in power, events will one day force England out of her present position as an independent group and drive her to depend on Italy and Austria. Meanwhile we do not expect the arrival of this moment so soon as they hope in Vienna. But it is not to our interests to deprive the Austrians of their hope of a future rapprochement with England. All we have to demand is that, so long as it is merely a matter of hopes and feelings, and not of firm treaty agreements with England, the Vienna Cabinet shall not shape its Eastern policy in the Russian sense, and so become a buffer state between England and Russia.

It is not out of the question that Russia may attempt, in the near future, to win a preferential right to the passage through the Straits. The fact that the Dardanelles form a base for an attack on the Suez Canal will bring the Anglo-Russian conflict a step nearer. Austria's and Italy's attitude towards this important event will depend on England's. Should these two Powers find that Russia's penetration into the Mediterranean threatens their interests, they would have to oppose it in good time, so as to coincide with the outbreak of the inevitable Anglo-Russian conflict, but not in any way prematurely, i.e. while it is still possible for England to refuse battle.

It may not be a mistake to assume that England's attitude will alter from the moment that Russia obtains freedom of passage into the Mediterranean, when the hope now cherished by England —that the Triple Alliance will defend the Straits—falls to the ground.

Finally a word as to the legal side of the Straits question. The Article in the Peace of Berlin affecting this is capable of two interpretations, which are described in the Protocol of the Congress.

The Russian one, as given by Count Shouvaloff, explains the Article as *closing* the Straits.

The British interpretation, given by Lord Salisbury, was that England regarded the Sultan as sovereign of the Straits, and therefore as justified in granting a free passage at his pleasure.

It would be a curious sport of fortune that, should Russia come to an agreement with the Sultan with regard to the passage of the Straits, she would then be in a position to justify it on the grounds of the British interpretation of the Treaty of Berlin.

XI. 135

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *February 18th*, 1896

Telegram.

Our Ambassador in St. Petersburg [1] reports on the 16th: 'The Foreign Office here announces that M. Cambon, French Ambassador in Constantinople, is going to Egypt to represent France there. It is said that England, in order to break the force of any Russo-French action in the Egyptian question, has made important concessions to France in the control of the Nile country, and that the French representative in Cairo (Cogordan) will enjoy a more influential position than heretofore.'

Perhaps you will be able to gather some hints, by mentioning to Baron Courcel the St. Petersburg origin of the report, and treating it quite casually as an accomplished fact, not, however, betraying any appearance of anxiety on your part.

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *February 19th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

The French Ambassador, to whom I was recently able to speak in the sense of the instructions sent to me yesterday, replied that he could definitely assure me that there was no truth in the alleged understanding with England, concerning Egypt.

XI. 136

German Note.

On February 21st, 1896, *The Times* made the sensational announcement that the newly appointed Turkish Ambassador in London, Costaki Anthropulo Pacha, had been instructed to request the British Government to settle with the Porte the question of the evacuation of Egypt.

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[1] Prince Radolin.

XI. 139

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT ZU EULENBURG, IN VIENNA,
February 23rd, 1896

Telegram.

About a week ago Prince Radolin reported (from St. Petersburg) that it was stated in the Russian Foreign Office that negotiations were going on between Turkey, France and England with the object of granting France more control than hitherto in Egyptian affairs—somewhat in the sense of the former Condominium.

We instituted enquiries and ascertained yesterday that negotiations have been going on for some time, which aim at reducing England's influence in Egypt and at bringing about evacuation of the country in return for suitable guarantees.

Lord Salisbury's inclination to win France over by means of concessions explains the attitude assumed by the British Government since the second half of December, when it refused to consider the Italian wishes in the Zeyla question.[1]

On the 17th Cambon, the Ambassador, went to Egypt to visit his sick wife, but there is good reason to suppose that the journey is not unconnected with the unfinished negotiations and the increase of control to be granted to France over Egyptian affairs.

If these negotiations really lead to a compact, England will have made a fatal mistake. I put aside the case in which an understanding about Egypt might result in a firm Anglo-French Alliance against everyone—even Russia. But this case hardly comes into the discussion, as a British Government would be unable to conclude a far-reaching agreement of this kind with really binding force, for France, on the other hand, having seen that the first result of the Franco-Russian connection was that England drew back on a question of first importance, would be all the less willing to break away from Russia. Apart also from the possibility of an alliance, the fact that England clearly wishes to avoid a conflict with France at any price, shows that she would cease to be a useful factor in the future of the Triple Alliance. The Triple Alliance would then naturally seek to draw nearer to Russia. Thus all the continental Powers would be together in a group, which in spite of differences of opinion on every other question, would be united in the one thought, which is that England is never any help and often does harm. This thought would, as a natural consequence, be the governing one in world politics until further notice.

If we wait now for these negotiations to be completed, we shall gradually get used to the possibility that Europe may be forced

[1] Cf. p. 395.

by the short-sighted policy of England to strike off in a new direction.

[In the following despatch Prince Hohenlohe refers to Lord Salisbury's Balkan programme, his refusal to consider Italy's wishes in Abyssinia, and his readiness to make friends with France. He concludes as follows :]

XI. 140

THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, TO PRINCE RADOLIN, IN ST. PETERSBURG, *February 24th*, 1896

Extract.

We can await calmly whatever happens ; for the result of England's latest policy has been to convince these States, whose tradition it has been to march with England, more and more forcibly that England's alleged friendship is a one-sided conception. Therefore in the enterprises contemplated by England in the near future—whether in the Far East, Southern Persia, or against Portugal in South Africa—she will, as far as can be judged here to-day, remain isolated ; but even in isolation she will be a strong opponent owing to her wealth and her navy.

This candid description of our political position is meant as a guide for your words. I beg you to discuss it frankly with Prince Lobanoff, but without *empressement*, whenever an opportunity occurs.

XI. 105

COUNT ZU EULENBURG, AMBASSADOR IN VIENNA, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *February 24th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

Count Goluchovski informed me with some embarrassment that Lord Salisbury had rejected the proposals made through Count Deym for a renewal, with alterations, of the *Accord à trois*. Lord Salisbury had declared, as his reason for doing so, that British public opinion, and indeed, the general feeling in his own Government, was set too strongly against the Turks for him to dream of an Agreement undertaken actually in Turkey's interests. To avoid putting the rejection too bluntly, Lord Salisbury finally said that he had felt sure that the appearance in the Bosphorus of even two Russian war-ships would cause a total revulsion in public opinion in England.

My British colleague (Sir E. Monson) repeated Lord Salisbury's reply to Count Goluchovski.

Apparently these explanations were made some time ago. Count Goluchovski's hesitation in informing me of it may indicate either injured vanity, or else that further attempts were made at an understanding.

I asked whether I was to consider the rejection as final. The answer was: 'Absolutely final now; but a time will certainly come, when England will be obliged to turn to us again.'

The Count's manner clearly betrayed his deep disappointment.

XI. 145

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *February 27th*, 1896

Regarding the Egyptian negotiations Baron Saurma telegraphs that the first suggestion for Anglo-Turkish negotiations came from London, where a wish was expressed to the Porte for the resumption of England's old friendly relations with Turkey. The Sultan is said to have replied that a practical expression of this wish could easily be found in the evacuation of Egypt; then followed a further exchange of opinions. There is now a pause. The Porte has not despatched the proposals which it prepared, because it believes that the British Government is still busy observing how the fact that Egyptian negotiations are in progress is affecting British public opinion.

The French Ambassador in Vienna [1] has informed Count Goluchovski that he is aware of Anglo-French negotiations. The Ambassador is in constant communication with M. Hanotaux. Count Münster reports that when Baron Courcel is in Paris, he confers more with M. Hanotaux than with M. Berthelot.

Count Goluchovski thinks that a Convention *à la Drummond Wolff*, involving evacuation after a short interval, would improve Anglo-French relations, whilst a joint Condominium, like every other of the sort, will end by driving both participants into war. Count Goluchovski, who wishes for an Anglo-French rapprochement, is therefore less likely to speak in London against evacuation, then against a Condominium.

Colonel Swaine said here yesterday that Lord Wolseley,[2] who is against occupying Egypt, said in 1882 that, as time went on, British public opinion would make it more and more difficult for the Government to evacuate Egypt. The Colonel doubts whether the Government could do so even now.

The enthusiasm expressed for Chamberlain by well-informed French papers, such as the *Temps*, leads to the supposition that he is the chief mover of the notion of making Egyptian concessions. Lord Salisbury is being pushed by Chamberlain,—or was so, perhaps, for a short time.

[1] H. A. Lozé.

[2] Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, Leader of the Expedition against Arabi Pacha, 1882, and against the Mahdi, 1884.

XI. 147

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *March 4th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

To-day Lord Salisbury spoke confidentially about the attitude of the British Press towards us and mentioned the assertion which had appeared in it that the Sultan's action regarding Egypt was to be ascribed to German influence. Lord Salisbury informed me without hesitation that the initiative about Egypt came from the Sultan, who had expressed quite generally a desire for a fresh exchange of ideas on the question.[1] He, Lord Salisbury, had only been able to answer that he would naturally listen to any communications regarding the Sultan's wishes. But nothing had followed, and he was now assured that the Sultan had dropped the matter again.

Later in our conversation, Lord Salisbury declared that France was not concerned in the affair in any way. With equal definiteness he assured me that the negotiations now proceeding in Paris were not about a political understanding with France, but solely about colonial matters.[2]

My Italian colleague, who had seen the Prime Minister before I did, had received the impression that Lord Salisbury strongly wished Italy to stick to the Triple Alliance. (The EMPEROR: '*Then he ought to make it easy for Italy by helping her at once.*')

XI. 149

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *March 5th*, 1896

Extract.

During yesterday's conversation, Lord Salisbury told me in confidence that the conditions under which government is, and unfortunately can only be carried on in England, are still but little understood abroad. It is easy in Russia to pursue a consistent foreign policy, following its aims without hindrance. Russia is not obliged to publish her methods nor to gain the consent of public opinion; whereas all parliamentary States have this difficulty in greater or smaller measure to contend with. Nowhere, as much as in England, are there such obstacles in the way of the consistent and logical treatment of foreign affairs. (The EMPEROR: '*When she seeks an advantage, England is perfectly logical and consistent.*') He, Lord Salisbury, has to reckon with the changing opinions and impressions of the multitude, and

[1] Cf. the Turkish version, p. 419. [2] Siam.

hence the fact, not sufficiently appreciated abroad, that even in his own Cabinet he is faced with differences of view, which he is obliged to humour.

As regards this last point, I may remark that I think that this is a genuine complaint of the Prime Minister's. For a long time I have had the impression, shared by many of my colleagues, that Lord Salisbury no longer exercises the unquestioned influence over all his colleagues, which he undoubtedly enjoyed during his earlier terms of Office. (The EMPEROR: '*That may well be so.*') Not only has he to reckon with the ambition of his very competent Colonial Secretary, who will play a great part one day, but there are also other members of his Cabinet, whom he could formerly count on controlling, but who now sometimes follow their own lines and go off in directions, which the Prime Minister cannot prevent, even when he does not like it. Mr. Balfour even, his own nephew, is not always obedient, as appeared lately in his announcement on the Currency question;[1] and Mr. Goschen's recent speech at Lewes on foreign policy adopted a tone little in accordance with Lord Salisbury's wishes. In our very confidential conversation the latter did not hesitate to say this to me frankly. (The EMPEROR: '*But it was said privately.*')

We shall have to see whether Lord Salisbury succeeds in regaining his former command of the Cabinet, when England is faced with some great decision.

For the present my general impression from this conversation is that in foreign policy here, if there is no fresh turn in favour of the Triple Alliance, there is at any rate a pause in the efforts that were being directed against it. (The EMPEROR: '*That is so much to the good.*') Whether this is owing to Russia's disinclination—often admitted by Lord Salisbury—to accept the proffer of friendship, or to difficulties with the French, who perhaps demand too high a price for their friendship, or whether the Prime Minister did not really intend to make so fundamental a departure from his earlier views, it is hard to explain fully. It would be equally hard to express a decided opinion as to whether this change, if there is one, will be a lasting one, especially if something fresh occurred to re-kindle amongst the masses the recently arisen dislike of a rapprochement with Germany. With this reservation, I think I may regard it as a remarkable symptom, that the Prime Minister entirely resumed yesterday that completely friendly and confidential tone, which used to allow us to discuss the most difficult questions frankly and without the slightest fear of indiscretion. (The EMPEROR: '*Very satisfactory.*')

[1] In 1888 Mr. A. J. Balfour served on the *Gold and Silver Commission* and was an advocate of the Bi-metallic standard for the national Currency. The controversy continued at intervals for several years.

[On March 1st, 1896, the Italians were heavily defeated by the Abyssinians at Adowa, and Kassala was threatened. The Sirdar, Sir Herbert Kitchener, was immediately ordered to commence a campaign against the Dervishes.]

XI. 236

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON MARSCHALL, *March 4th (approx.)*, 1896

Sir Frank to-day showed me a telegram, which he has sent off to Lord Salisbury after a two hours' conversation with His Majesty. Its contents are as follows:

His Majesty first expressed his great anxiety regarding the Italian position in Abyssinia. France was making war there against Italy. According to his information there was between France and Russia, not a political, but rather a military alliance, by which France placed her whole land and sea forces unconditionally at Russia's disposal. Russia had two enemies, whom she wished to destroy, England and Austria-Hungary.[1] She would first try 'to overcome them' by peaceful means, but she was determined to go to war, even if it was to last ten years. Russia had made it clear to France that she could not hope to regain Alsace-Lorraine. The Russian plan was—to annex Bulgaria and the Balkan States including Austria's Slav districts, and to draw Germany away from Austria by offering her the German provinces. As soon as the Italians were driven out of Abyssinia, Russia meant to seize upon Massowah and other positions, so as to get the sea route to India into her hands. At the same time the Egyptian question was to be revived, and France to be indemnified with the Canary Islands. Not only were the Russian statesmen in favour of this plan, but the Emperor Nicholas had sanctioned it. Although the British Press and certain statesmen had treated him badly, His Majesty held it his duty to warn England of the danger. He was glad that the British fleet had been increased [2] and was waiting for England to join the Triple Alliance, or at any rate help Italy in her difficult situation.

XI. 241

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *March 12th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

Lord Salisbury tells me that owing to the advance of the Dervishes against Kassala, the British Government has decided to make a military diversion from Egypt in the direction of Don-

[1] Cf. W. H. Wilson, *The War Guilt*, p. 55. [2] Cf. p. 396.

gola, which would help Italy.[1] (The EMPEROR: '*So Lascelles has accepted my advice!*') The arrangements are being now made by the War Office. It does not imply a large expedition, and for the present it will not pass beyond Dongola. It is supposed here that it will suffice to frighten the Dervishes and induce them to retire from Kassala.

The Prime Minister expressed much satisfaction at the new Italian Ministry,[2] especially at the appointment of Marquis Rudini and the Duke of Sermoneta, and I assume that the present move in Italy's favour is partly due to this satisfaction.

XI. 151

COUNT MÜNSTER, IN PARIS, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *March 13th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

To-day Lord Dufferin informed the Foreign Minister in writing that the British Cabinet, at the request of the Egyptian Government, had decided to send a division forward to Dongola forthwith. The main object of this is to help the Italians at Kassala, but the result will be that the British will greatly strengthen their army and will probably push forward to Khartoum later.

The French will not welcome this important piece of news; it destroys their hopes of an understanding regarding Egypt. (The EMPEROR: '*Hurrah!*')

XI. 152

LORD SALISBURY TO SIR FRANK LASCELLES, IN BERLIN, *March 15th*, 1896

Telegram.

For some time past Her Majesty's Government have been consulting with the Egyptian Military Authorities as to the movements of the Dervishes, which threaten the position of the Italians at Kassala, as well as the Egyptian posts round the town of Suakim. Supposing an attack on Kassala were successful, or even if military reasons should compel the Italian Government to withdraw their troops from Kassala, clearly an outbreak of fanaticism may ensue, and Khalifa Abdullah's influence may be considerably augmented, while the Dervish troops will be encouraged to attack the frontiers of Egypt, to defend which may cause serious trouble.

[1] Cf. Sir George Arthur, *Life of Lord Kitchener*, I, 186; Lord Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, II, 83; Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, *The River War*, I, 170.

[2] The Abyssinian débâcle caused the fall of Crispi's Cabinet on March 10th, 1896.

Some immediate action has been strongly urged by the military authorities in England and Egypt, and Her Majesty's Government have decided, after mature consideration, that the action most advantageous for the permanent and present interests of Egypt would be an advance up the Nile Valley, and that the occupation of Dongola would be expedient.

Doubtless the operation must sooner or later be undertaken, and an intimation has been conveyed to the Egyptian Government by Her Majesty's Government that they are prepared to afford immediate support and sanction to that operation. However, this operation being of some magnitude, it will require expenditure of funds greater than those at the absolute disposal of the Egyptian Government.

It is therefore the hope of Her Majesty's Government that the sum of £500,000 out of the reserve fund of £2,500,000, may be authorised by the Commissioners of the Caisse de la Dette for this object. This fund, which has accumulated, is held applicable to extraordinary expenses.[1]

[Italy and Germany gave this authorisation immediately.]

XI. 242

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN BERLIN, *March 13th*, 1896

The British Ambassador visited me to-day and read me a confidential letter from Lord Salisbury in connection with His Majesty's recent conversation with Sir Frank Lascelles.

Lord Salisbury declared his readiness to reply to the questions raised by Lascelles' report. He desired to be on the same footing of mutual friendship with Germany as formerly. England wished to lean towards the Triple Alliance, but would never give a promise engaging her to go to war in any event in the future. This policy was forced on the Government, first by public opinion, which would throw over any such arrangements, when the time came, and also by the insular position of the country, which appeared to render it unnecessary for defensive purposes to undertake an engagement to go to war. Whether comprehensible or not, this policy was the only one possible for England, and during his last term of Office (1886–92) he had consistently pursued it. The Emperor had recognised this then—why did he not do so now? He gathered from the Ambassador's report that His Majesty was not in agreement with British policy on three points:

1. The attitude towards the Italian wishes regarding Zeyla. It appeared to be believed in Germany that he, Lord Salisbury,

[1] Cf. Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, II, 85; Churchill, *The River War*, I, 173.

had merely referred the Italian Government to France. This was not correct. Leave to land at Zeyla had been granted to the Italians unconditionally, and it was merely on account of its possible reactions on Harrar that friendly advice had been offered to the Rome Cabinet to come to an understanding with France.

2. England's attitude in the preceding year on the Far Eastern question. This had to do with his predecessor's policy. He, Salisbury, was too little informed of the details of what happened then to be able to give an opinion.

3. British policy in the Armenian question. He was reproached with having tried, against the interests of the Triple Alliance, to shake the existence of the Turkish Empire. But His Majesty was old enough to remember the Bulgarian atrocities and their influence on British policy. Like a snowstorm in the Alps or a typhoon in the South Seas, philanthropic movements arose in England with a force as of the elements. He had never been faced by such a 'hurricane' as when last year he took over the Government and with it the Armenian question. He had been greatly 'puzzled' on learning of the 'hostile dispositions' shown in Germany at that juncture. But after the 'emphatic statements' made more than once by His Majesty to Colonel Swaine,[1] the telegram to President Kruger was no longer a cause of astonishment to him, Salisbury, although before that he had not understood the change of feeling.

Lord Salisbury's letter ends with a repetition of the wish for mutual friendly relations between England and Germany.

XI. 156

COUNT MÜNSTER, IN PARIS, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *March 18th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

Public opinion, and also M. Berthelot himself, are very disagreeably surprised at the Anglo-Egyptian advance on Dongola. The Minister, to whom I have just spoken, was quite excited. Having communicated the decision of the British Government, Lord Dufferin, in a second note, requested the French Government to consent that the cost of the expedition should be partly defrayed out of the reserve fund of the *Caisse de la Dette*, which is under European control. M. Berthelot has not yet returned a decisive refusal, but he will shortly do so, especially as the Russian Cabinet, even before the French enquiry reached St. Petersburg, declared here that it had rejected the British proposal forthwith. The Minister said: 'Having reached an understanding with England regarding Siam, we hoped to be able to count on a certain

[1] Cf. pp. 349, 359, 368.

amount of compliance on the part of the British Cabinet. Baron de Courcel's reports seemed to favour this conclusion, when suddenly and to our astonishment the British Cabinet has decided on measures, the dangerous consequences of which cannot yet be estimated.'

Here England's action is regarded as a hostile act, and the consideration for Italy merely as a pretext.

XI. 161

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *March 19th*, 1896

Cipher.

My impression from the Prime Minister's words is that he believes that he will have no serious difficulty with the French regarding Dongola, and that the lack of co-operation in Paris will not prevent him from carrying out his object. But he reminded me with emphasis of his recent statement which I reported on March 12th, that he contemplated no great military undertaking against the Dervishes, but only a military diversion within set and moderate limits. He made a significant statement that the greatest difficulty he had to contend with was in restraining the keenness of the military element. Even during his leave, which he hopes to take in any case on March 26th, he will have from a distance to ensure that the enterprise assumes no greater dimensions than he intended from the beginning.

Lord Salisbury expressed lively gratitude for our willingness to consent to the use for the expedition of the sum asked for out of the Egyptian fund. He added that he expected Austria's consent at any moment, when a majority of the Commission would be assured. It was an absolute fact that unanimity was not required.

As your telegram of the 18th had not yet reached me, I expressed no opinion, but did not question the Minister's views.

German Note.

The telegram referred to instructed Hatzfeldt as follows:

'We know of no legal grounds obliging us to adopt a line on this point or to oppose the British view. Please express yourself in this sense in case you are addressed on the subject of majority or unanimity.'

[The Cabinet's decision only reached Kitchener at 3 a.m. on March 13th. Lord Cromer and he took immediate action on it, and set to work to prepare for the Expedition forthwith. Cf. *Lord Kitchener's Life*, I, 186 et seq.; also Lord Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, II, 83 et seq.]

XI. 163

COUNT VON METTERNICH, CONSUL-GENERAL IN CAIRO, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *March 12th*, 1896

I have only spoken once to Lord Cromer *en passant* and in the presence of others, but on taking leave, I was able to refer to the

'Job's news' from Abyssinia. When he expressed regret at the Italian defeat, I told him without circumlocution that England ought to have given help a long time ago. (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*') His reply was evasive. Up till now Lord Cromer has decidedly opposed an active policy in the Sudan, chiefly for financial reasons. He feared that if the Egyptian finances, the surplus of which would be made unavailable by the Caisse de la Dette, fell into disorder owing to a campaign in the Sudan, the best reason to offer to foreign countries in favour of the British occupation of Egypt would fall to the ground. I have reason to suspect that Lord Cromer's attitude changed some days ago,[1] and that he no longer refuses to consider that it would be to Anglo-Egyptian interests for England now to assist Italy immediately. If Lord Cromer supports this view with energy in London, it is not altogether beyond hope, considering the weight attached by Lord Salisbury, so far as I know, to his opinions on Egyptian affairs, that the Prime Minister may renounce his inactivity. Concerning Lord Cromer's alteration of view in Italy's favour I learn as follows:

General Kitchener, the Sirdar of the Egyptian Army, whom I have known for some time, explained to me with warmth that England must quickly help Italy both for reasons of general policy, in order to secure Italy's lasting friendship for England, and also in the interests of England's position in Egypt, and to protect the Southern frontier of Egypt against the Dervishes. (The EMPEROR: '*I preached this to them a year ago.*') It was against the wish and advice of England at the time that Kassala was occupied by the Italians. When Lord Kimberley heard of the seizure of Kassala, he, Kitchener, happened to be present. The Minister exclaimed: 'I can't believe it.' However it might have been then, it was now to England's interest to help Italy. Lord Cromer even, who till then had been against any policy in the Sudan, was now inclining to support the Italians with an Expeditionary Force by way of Suakim and Kassala.

The Sirdar wishes to relieve Kassala from Suakim and at the same time to help on peace negotiations between Italy and Menelik, whose leaders he knows personally to some extent.

I asked how the position was viewed in London. The Sirdar said that he feared that the Government would oppose active support of Italy. I replied with the brusque frankness, which is sometimes successful in one's dealings with Englishmen, that the British article of faith, forbidding a man to help a friend in need under any circumstances, was carried so far apparently that an Englishman would rather suffer loss himself than go to help another. (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*') It was obvious that the

[1] Cromer's *Modern Egypt*, II, 84.

opportunity of breaking the Mahdi's power and thereby securing the frontiers of Egypt, was better, whilst Kassala held firm, than afterwards. It was hard to explain the British Government's attitude from the point of view of its own interests. It was missing a chance, which might never return so conveniently, of strengthening its position in Egypt and of keeping Italy's friendship for future emergencies. Moreover the question was one in which England would meet opposition from no Great Power and would certainly be sure of the sympathy of Italy's friends. (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*') I also impressed upon the Sirdar that it must influence the decisions of the London Government, if the authorities here would raise their voices in the sense of supporting Italy and point out the dangers to Egypt entailed by the fall of Kassala. (The EMPEROR: '*Yes.*') The Sirdar gave me to understand that he believed Lord Cromer intended to report in a similar sense.

XI. 167

RADOLIN, IN ST. PETERSBURG, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *March 21st*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

I found Prince Lobanoff to-day curiously preoccupied by the political situation in Egypt. . . . He seems not yet to have made up his mind as to the reply to be returned to the British proposal, but I doubt whether it will be different from the French reply. He considers that the projected expedition to Dongola is not necessary for the protection of Egypt, but is an aggressive action by England, alleged naturally to be in Italy's interests, and incalculable in its consequences. (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*') He describes the British methods as clumsy. England ought to have agreed amicably with France, and then quietly with the other Powers, as to the admissibility and opportuneness of using Egyptian money. The French refusal, which England lightheartedly drew upon herself, had made an agreement much harder. (The EMPEROR: '*All the better.*') England was quite rich enough to pay for such an adventure herself if she wanted to undertake it, so why should Egyptian money be used for an expedition which was not Egyptian and would be immensely costly? Moreover, England had ignored the Khedive and his overlord, the Sultan, the latter of whom was not once mentioned in the proposals.

Marquis Maffei (Italian Ambassador in St. Petersburg) showed me in confidence a telegram from the Italian Ambassador in Paris. M. Berthelot had informed him that a reply to the British proposal was not yet to be given by France, but had indicated that it would be in the negative. The Egyptian surplus was meant

for other purposes than for an expedition, the necessity for which was not proven. Prince Lobanoff had said to Marquis Maffei almost word for word the same as he said to me, and also added that England was rich enough to pay for the expedition out of her own pocket.

Marquis Maffei thinks that he knows that the French refusal would take the usual form of an exchange of notes between friendly Powers. My impression is that Prince Lobanoff earnestly wishes to avoid all complications, but cannot find the desired solution. (The EMPEROR: '*Good.—Our object is gained. England has made a move and is compromised. Her flirtation with Gallo-Russia is upset. That is all I wanted. I am delighted.*')

XI. 168

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *March 21st*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

Lord Salisbury declares that Russia has definitely refused to agree to the application of the sum asked for here out of the Egyptian surplus, to the purposes of the expedition (The EMPEROR: '*Good.*'), and that the French Government's reply is still pending.

Lord Salisbury does not think that the financial question will introduce complications. (The EMPEROR: '*Just wait.*') He assumes that the sum in question, once the majority of the Commission has assented, will be earmarked without further question for the expedition, and that France, who does not wish for a war on this account, will not make serious difficulties. (The EMPEROR: '*Not just yet perhaps.*')

XI. 172

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *March 26th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

The French Ambassador communicated yesterday to Lord Salisbury the French Government's refusal regarding the financial question. No further negotiations seem to have taken place, nor will there be any for the present, as the Prime Minister has gone away.

The French and Russian Ambassadors told me very confidentially that they considered their Governments' refusal to consent on the question of finance to have been a mistake, for it would not prevent the expedition, and if England was really forced to meet it out of her own resources, she was strengthening her claim to prolong the occupation.

Both Ambassadors assume that the French and Russian Commissioners of the Debt will protest to-day against the majority's decision, and that a long discussion of the legal aspect will ensue between the Powers.

[The French and Russian Commissioners appealed to the Mixed Tribunal immediately. This Court (June 8th, 1896) and also the Court of Appeal at Alexandria (December 2nd), the President of which was a Frenchman, decided that the Egyptian Government must reimburse the Caisse de la Dette.[1] The British Government provided the sum necessary, and the Egyptian Government promptly carried out the Court's decision.]

XI. 207

Count Hatzfeldt to the Chancellor, Prince von Hohenlohe, *July 15th*, 1896

Cipher

In the course of conversation to-day Lord Salisbury remarked, with reference to the views on the Egyptian question hitherto ascribed to Prince Lobanoff, that he was well aware that the Prince had tried to come to an understanding with the French Government about summoning a Conference. But M. Hanotaux had made his consent depend on two main conditions, which were :—

1. Russia must engage to help France in any war that might break out between England and France on account of Egypt ; and

2. Must undertake the same engagement in the event of war between France and Germany, i.e., she must engage to take part in a French war of revenge.

Prince Lobanoff, however, refused to discuss these conditions.

[The Russian Emperor and Empress paid a visit to Vienna (August 27–9, 1896) and Prince Lobanoff accompanied them. In a conversation with Count Eulenburg, the German Ambassador, he violently attacked the British in Egypt, saying that the Suez Canal must not be allowed to remain in their hands.[2]]

German Note.

. . . Prince Lobanoff died suddenly on the return journey to Kieff (August 30th). In consequence of his death, his fixed intention to bring the Egyptian question before the Powers in some form and to settle it thus, remained unfulfilled, and that question immediately ceased to be a corner-stone in the relations between the Powers. It was not until the Fashoda dispute that the question became critical again.

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[1] Lord Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, II, 91–2.

[2] Cf. p. 432.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE STRAITS QUESTION, AND TURKISH REFORMS. JUNE, 1896–FEBRUARY, 1897

[The negotiations, which were carried on with regard to the treatment of Turkey, were hampered on the one hand by the refusal of the Tsar to join in any coercive measures, in the process of inducing the Sultan to introduce reforms into his Empire, and, on the other, by Lord Salisbury's unwillingness to promise definite military or naval action in the event of Russia advancing on Constantinople. Austria was represented as the chief sufferer in such an event. Lord Salisbury, however, continued to keep clear of the Triple Alliance and to prefer isolation for some time to come, at any rate.]

XII. 51

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *June 8th*, 1896

In our latest conversation, Lord Salisbury mentioned the question of the Straits near Constantinople and volunteered the remark that there was not much to object to in their being opened in *both* directions. It would be a very different affair for England, if Russia allowed them to be open only on one side and so secured her own entry into the Mediterranean, without admitting others into the Black Sea.

On this occasion Lord Salisbury spoke in general with more irritation than before about Russia, and especially about Prince Lobanoff, of whom he said repeatedly: 'I no longer understand the man and do not know what he wants.' (The EMPEROR: '*Lobanoff says just the same about Salisbury, and so do we!*')

The Minister's words on England's chances in the event of a clash with Russia and France in the Mediterranean were worth noting. With great self-confidence and unusual decision he said: 'We are now quite sure that we could by ourselves deal with *both* Powers successfully there.' (The EMPEROR: '*Let him show us how he will do it!*')

We then spoke of the news in the papers of the completion of Biserta harbour. Lord Salisbury said he still adhered to the British Admiralty's view, namely, that for the present, at least, this port need not be considered as strengthening the French

Navy.[1] (The EMPEROR: '*Quem Deus, etc.!*') The use of the harbour by the French would involve splitting up the French fleet and would thus be not unfavourable for England. Moreover, there was nothing but the harbour itself, and everything else was lacking. If, after the outbreak of hostilities, a French squadron under these circumstances ran into Biserta, it would be entirely in the air there, whilst England would be holding Malta and Gibraltar (The EMPEROR: '*She would then also be split up!*') and could make them her bases.

(The EMPEROR: '*Do not forget that in a military sense Toulon and Biserta form an inner line between Gibraltar and Malta, so that a partially divided French fleet could certainly unite quicker on that line than the British squadrons in the above-mentioned two ports. For if they attempted to unite, one of the two would always be in danger of being caught by the combined French squadrons.*')

XII. 55

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON MARSCHALL, *August 31st*, 1896

The British Ambassador informed me confidentially to-day that yesterday, at an Audience, which he had requested with His Majesty the Emperor, he had delivered Lord Salisbury's reply to the recent enquiries respecting the Dardanelles. His Majesty charged the Ambassador to thank Lord Salisbury and to say that by the 'Dardanelles' he understood the Straits, and that he shared the Premier's opinion regarding the resistance that was to be expected from Austria-Hungary.

[Lord Salisbury's message was that the British view had long been that the proper solution to aim at was the opening of the Straits *for all nations*. The opening of the Dardanelles alone was not altogether satisfactory, but it would nevertheless be acceptable for England. The most serious objections against that solution were to be expected from Austria-Hungary.]

His Majesty then informed the Ambassador of an interview between the German Ambassador, Count Eulenburg, and Prince Lobanoff[2] and of the Prince's violent attacks against England, his remarks on the Russian interests in the Suez Canal and on the possibility of solving the problem of the Straits. His Majesty ended his communication to Sir Frank Lascelles with a warning that Lobanoff clearly intended a coup in Egypt, and that England ought to be prepared in good time.

Sir Frank read me his telegraphic report to Lord Salisbury, embodying His Majesty's suggestions mentioned above.

[1] Cf. Vol. II, p. 430.
[2] On the occasion of the Tsar's visit to Vienna.

XII. 58

COUNT ZU EULENBURG, IN VIENNA, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *September* 1st, 1896

Extract. Secret.

Prince Lobanoff's sudden death [1] modifies the significance of my last conversation with him. The only question is whether his interesting remarks about the Dardanelles were made on the spur of the moment or were connected with the communication made to His Majesty by the British Ambassador in Berlin under instructions from Lord Salisbury. To say the least, it is remarkable that the two Ministers' agreement in opinion coincided at the same moment—and even more remarkable Lord Salisbury's hint at Austria's unwillingness to come into line, from which may be deduced, first, a silent indication of the understanding with Russia, and secondly, a challenge to Germany to cast off the last drag-chain.

The following circumstance also may give cause for reflection. On August 29th I was at the house of my Russian colleague,[2] and I described part of my conversation with Prince Lobanoff, and mentioned his remark about the Dardanelles.

[This was as follows : ' I have certainly thought about the question of right of passage. Why could it not be settled that the passage is free to all Powers in peace time—and closed in time of war ? ']

Count Kapnist was greatly astounded. He said : ' I am so much accustomed to regard the Black Sea as a Russian *mare clausum* that I can hardly understand the object of Lobanoff's words. You probably took him by surprise. The Prince always gave himself up to one single idea at a time with uncommon intensity. Now it is the development of the Far East and naturally the freedom of the Suez Canal, which was bound up with it. The Near East, with all its dangers, is ignored by him, alas ! Thus, he may have been speaking without much consideration, when he made the remark about the possibility of securing for all nations freedom of passage for their war-ships through the Dardanelles.'

I replied that the Prince's remark was not lightly made, but was very decided, his first words being : ' J'ai bien réfléchi sur cette question.'

Next day Count Kapnist twice tried in vain to get a word with me. I went to him, and he began again about the Dardanelles.

' I have been thinking again of the Prince's words,' he said.

[1] He died on August 30th, on the journey from Vienna to Kiev. Cf. p. 430 ; also Lee, *King Edward VII*, I, 694.

[2] Count Kapnist.

'There is much to be said *for* this view—but there is quite as much against it.'

The change in the Count's opinions was so remarkable, that I must assume that he telegraphed my conversation to Prince Lobanoff and received orders to agree with it—unless perhaps he wished to tone down the divergence between his views and those of his Chief.

Now that the Prince is dead, the Ambassador's anomalous attitude will be of interest.

As regards the matter itself—in the event of an exchange of views having taken place between England and Russia—the visit of the Russian Imperial couple to Balmoral[1] will be of great importance. Who can tell what the voluminous correspondence between Queen Victoria and the Tsar contains, of which Prince Lobanoff spoke to me? What was the answer that the Prince of Battenberg brought to London?

[One of Prince Lobanoff's complaints, in his conversation with Count zu Eulenburg (XI, 209), was as follows: 'Queen Victoria is perpetually writing to the Tsar, who naturally hands every letter to me. She complains bitterly of the policy we are pursuing against England. She even entrusted Prince Battenberg with a special mission to Moscow, and he made a protest to His Majesty regarding our attitude, with the idea of inducing the Tsar to alter it. His Majesty in a friendly manner referred him to me,—and I put to him our complaints at the attitude of England in Egypt in the form in which I have just repeated them to you. Nothing happened after that. All remains as before. . . .']

But if the Russian visit to Balmoral brings about an understanding between Russia and England (if only a transitory one), it will be from the hands of neither Germany nor Austria that Russia will have obtained the right of passage.

Although I think it highly opportune that the Great Powers should be clear as to the measures to be taken the moment that a real catastrophe occurs in Turkey, I think it very undesirable *now*, in consideration of the visit to Balmoral by the Russian Imperial couple with their Anglophil tendencies, to draw the Dardanelles into the scope of my conversations with Count Goluchovski. Seeing that Germany's position would become very difficult in the event of even a transitory understanding between Russia and England, I should not dare to make its path easy, by urging the Count to raise no difficulties on his side.

If an Anglo-Russian understanding of this kind comes to nothing, then—supposing Prince Lobanoff's successor really *desired* to go further with the ideas that he expressed—it might be better for Austria to come forward with proposals. But I have every reason to suppose that Count Goluchovski would be no more

[1] This took place at the end of September, 1896.

willing now than later on, to consent to an understanding or to let himself be persuaded into it. In certain questions, facts only influence him, and not arguments. We must expect, therefore, that the further development of affairs in the East will exercise a very decided influence on the Count's views.

XII. 64

COUNT ZU EULENBURG, IN VIENNA, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *September 21st*, 1896

In the course of a conversation yesterday about the strong excitement in British public opinion over the events in Turkey, Count Goluchovski spoke with much energy against the idea of a coalition of all the continental Powers against England. He exclaimed, ' I shall *never, never* be a party to it.'

German Note.

After the Armenian massacres, which followed on the rising of August 26th,[1] there was lively discussion in the British Press, and at meetings, of the Armenian affair, and a strong demand for action against the Turks for the protection of the Christians.

In spite of all the feeling against England, which has recently found expression, he now seems to feel the Russian attitude the more unwelcome, ' which was becoming more predominant in Constantinople, in proportion as England was making herself unpopular there.' (The EMPEROR : ' *He must have known this for a long time.*')

The inspection of the forts in the Dardanelles by Russian officers has affected the Count more than he admitted. A rather vehement outbreak against Prince Lobanoff, ' who had mockingly denied any thought of exercising any kind of influence in the Balkans, and had nevertheless gone on with all the existing relations,' made me again realise that even the strongest irritation against England is never anything but *transitory* with the Minister ; whereas his feeling against Russia is *permanent.*

German Note.

. . . Whilst at Balmoral, the Emperor Nicholas had on September 26th a conversation with Lord Salisbury, and the Press lost no time in announcing the completion of a thorough understanding between England and Russia on the Turkish question. As a matter of fact, the suspicion of British policy, felt by the Tsar and his advisers, was still far too great for them to make common cause with England.[2] This being so, the British Government attempted to revive the question of reform with the help of the Triple Alliance, so that if the attempt failed, it might be able to turn to the ' concert of Europe '.[3]

[On October 20th, 1896, Lord Salisbury issued a Circular, addressed in the first instance to the French Foreign Minister.[4] It recapitulated the

[1] Cf. p. 361. [2] Cf. p. 438. [3] Cf. Lee, *King Edward VII*, I, 696.
[4] Cf. *Staatsarchiv*, Vol. LIX, 268.

history of the combined efforts of the Powers to introduce reforms into the Turkish Empire and their complete failure. It continued :]

LORD SALISBURY TO THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER, *October 20th*, 1896

Extract.

All the Powers of Europe are at one in desiring to maintain the territorial *status quo* of the Turkish Empire, and those Powers whose territories lie closest to that Empire are most strongly impressed with this necessity. Their convictions upon this point may be sufficient to guarantee the Empire against every possible shock arising from external aggression, but they will not save it from the effect of misgovernment and internal decay.

The consultation of the Six Ambassadors at Constantinople appears to have been accompanied with a favourable result in dealing with the disorders of the Island of Crete. Their guidance is probably superior to any other that we can command, and I think we shall do wisely to commit to them the larger problem presented to us by the general condition of the Turkish Empire, and especially those portions of the Empire which are inhabited in considerable proportion by a Christian population. I propose that the Six Powers should instruct their representatives to consider and report to their Governments what changes in the government and administration of the Turkish Empire are, in their judgment, likely to be most effective in maintaining the stability of the Empire and preventing the recurrence of the frightful cruelties by which the last two years have been lamentably distinguished. . . .

I trust that the Powers will, in the first instance, come to a definite understanding, that their unanimous decision in these matters is to be final, and will be executed up to the measure of such force as the Powers have at their command. . . .

XII. 222

PRINCE VON RADOLIN, IN ST. PETERSBURG, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *November 20th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

I learn definitely that the Russian Emperor has rejected Lord Salisbury's proposal for joint action in Constantinople, which seems otherwise acceptable, for the reason that, as an autocrat, he cannot agree to participate in any coercive measures against a friendly autocratic sovereign.

Count Maffei showed me a telegram from his Government according to which Lord Salisbury declares that all the good of his proposal is destroyed, if Russia will not engage to join in any coercive measures that may be necessary. If Russia makes

reservations, the British Cabinet has nothing further to propose, and it will hand the responsibility over to Russia.

XII. 226

COUNT VON METTERNICH, CONSUL-GENERAL IN CAIRO, TO THE IMPERIAL CHANCELLOR, *November 25th*, 1896

Extract.

. . . Sir Philip Currie declared that reforms for Turkey, such as had been dreamed of by a few British world-humanitarians, were nonsense. Turkey needed no fresh arrangements, and could hardly bear those that she already had. What was wanted was 'men, not measures'. Such men existed in Turkey, but with this Sultan it was impossible to put the right men into the right places. He held the Sultan personally responsible for all the evil which had befallen Turkey. Amongst the expressions that Sir Philip applied to the Sultan, that of 'bloodthirsty monster' was not the most violent.

For the rest, I must admit that I have met no one in Constantinople who does not share the British Ambassador's opinion of the Sultan, although Sir Philip stands pre-eminent for plainness of speech. Even that placid thinker, Baron Calice, shares this generally adverse opinion, and thinks that, since the days when such considerable men as Count Hatzfeldt and Prince Lobanoff esteemed the Sultan, he has developed his base instincts, and the cowardly nature of a beast of prey has come to the front in him. . . .

Sir Philip Currie's program is as follows: deposition of the Sultan by the Powers (not by England, acting alone); to set up a new Sultan, with a Grand Vizir, strong with his master, but obedient to Sir Philip Currie; the recovery thereby of the lost British influence in Constantinople through the skill of Sir Philip Currie, he himself playing the leading political part there.

Furthermore, Sir Philip regards the Salisbury program as a step towards this object, and he has taken it up with fiery zeal. He gave it as his opinion that the Ambassadors on the spot alone could know what was needed. If it was necessary first to enquire of the Governments, there would never be unanimity.

M. de Nelidoff thinks otherwise. . . .

According to Baron Calice, the French Ambassador (M. Paul Cambon), whom neither I nor M. Nelidoff have seen personally, has spoken very reservedly regarding the British proposals. When asked by the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador why he would not take more account of them, M. Cambon replied that when questions touching the Turkish Empire had to be dealt with, the Egyptian question must be drawn, before all else, into the sphere of discussion.

Like all his colleagues, Baron Calice earnestly desires to prevent the recurrence of fresh disturbances. He considers a suitable means of attaining this object would be for the Ambassadors, in accordance with the British proposals, to be granted freedom to deal with the Sultan. . . . He considers that England's interests centre more in Egypt [than in the Dardanelles]—which is why Russia is trying to make difficulties for England there.[1] Nevertheless, Russia is not set on really driving the British out of Egypt. She needs the Suez route for her sea connections with the Far East. In peace-time the Suez Canal is free to Russia, as to all other nations; whereas in war-time it would be quite worthless, as it would be as good as filled in. The only use of the Egyptian question to Russian diplomacy against England, is therefore as an object for compensation, and she is trying it on with the British thus,—a free hand for Russia in the Straits, a free hand for England on the Nile.

This is how the Concert of Europe stood in Constantinople a fortnight ago. . . .

XII. 233.

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *December 9th*, 1896

Regarding the Russian Emperor's visit to Balmoral, I learn further from a very sure source, which I may not name, that His Majesty's conversations with the British Prime Minister led to no practical result, and brought but little satisfaction to the latter. In the discussion of their mutual relations, the two parties merely reached an understanding—which was kept on a very general footing—that the earth was large enough to permit both Powers to expand further, without necessarily coming into conflict. But when they came to deal with the Eastern question, which also was opened by Lord Salisbury, a definite, though negative, result did emerge. Directly Lord Salisbury, as was to be expected of him, hinted at the eventual necessity of deposing the Sultan, the Emperor Nicholas apparently stopped all further discussion with a definite declaration that there could be no question of that. . . .

At my latest meeting with Lord Salisbury, the Balmoral visit was casually mentioned. The Minister remarked that his conversation with the Tsar had satisfied him,—but there was no great warmth in the tone in which he made this assurance. He added for himself, that the young Emperor seemed to have a very delicate, if not a really weak, constitution. Anyone who has known the Prime Minister and his way of expressing himself for years as intimately as I have, would have little doubt that this seemingly casual remark had a deeper meaning. I myself have little doubt,

[1] Cf. p. 416.

that it was the expression of his annoyance at the poor success of his efforts at Balmoral, and that he meant that the Tsar was too weak and dependent on others for it to be possible to arrive at a definite and permanent understanding on difficult political questions—by direct negotiation with him. In this case, Lord Salisbury's anger is all the more explicable, if it is true, as I must suppose, that the Emperor Nicholas on this occasion definitely refused to depose the Sultan, because this point is still the Minister's favourite idea. My latest conversation with him convinced me of it.

XII. 65

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *December 10th*, 1896

Extract.

The conversation between Lord Salisbury and myself turned by a natural sequence to the intention, which is here generally attributed to Russia, of securing freedom of passage through the Dardanelles for herself, and of preventing the other Powers from entering the Black Sea. Lord Salisbury's remarks on this point were so obscure and contradictory, that it can only be assumed, either that he himself does not know what position to adopt, or that, at any rate, he wishes to avoid engaging himself just now in any direction. First he said that here the Treaty of Paris was regarded as covering these questions, but he went straight on to develop the idea that little could be done here to meet such an eventuality. This he followed up with the remark that *Austria* would in no case consent to action of this kind by Russia. (The EMPEROR: *'Aha!'*) . . .

XII. 249

BARON VON SAURMA, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *December 28th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

The Sultan sent word to me privately, that his absolute wish was that no programme of reforms which had been worked out by the Ambassadors, and which might perhaps injure his sovereign rights, should be submitted to him.

He wished, through his Ambassador in Berlin, to entreat the Emperor to indicate to him those reforms, the performance of which the Powers were about to demand of him, so that he might, of his own free will, be able to carry out those reforms immediately.

I showed complete reserve with regard to the Sultan's further desire that I should solicit Your Highness' support for his entreaty.

The same to the same, December 29th, 1896

Extract.

The Sultan is trying with feverish agitation—naturally without success—*in all directions,* to obtain knowledge of the reforms which the Powers intend to demand of him.

[A few days before the New Year, 1897, the Ambassadors in Constantinople met in conference, and on January 2nd, Baron von Saurma reported that they had drawn up a list of the worst abuses that needed reform, under nine headings, with the announcement that they would proceed to discuss the means for correcting them.]

XII. 256

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *January 7th,* 1897

In a short conversation with me yesterday, Lord Salisbury showed little satisfaction at the negotiations of the Ambassadors in Constantinople, which he criticised as being much too slow. He added in confidence that he did not look for a real success for the negotiations there, but expected rather that, even if the Ambassadors reached a conclusion, *one* of the Powers (which one he did not specify more closely) would, in the end, oppose its being carried out. (The EMPEROR: '*Perhaps he has already arranged this with the* one *in question? !*')

In the course of the conversation he more than once remarked that it would eventually fall to Austria, as the one most concerned, to deal with a Russian advance. (The EMPEROR: '*Then it is as I thought. Owing to lack of an army, Austria will have to do military service in England's interests; if she is involved, the Triple Alliance will have to follow suit, and then Salisbury will set Gaul at our heels! Then* vogue la galère, *and good-bye Africa for us? !*')

I replied to this insinuation in the customary manner, adding that I only imagine Austria coming to this decision, if she was certain of having the British fleet behind her. To this the Minister, as usual, failed to reply. (The EMPEROR: '*Very well said.—Philipp (Eulenburg) should warn them of this in Vienna.*')

XII. 71

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM, IN BERLIN, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *January 15th,* 1897

Dear Uncle,

At to-day's shooting party I was able to discuss with the British Military Attaché,[1] in confidence, all manner of subjects affecting England. With the idea of eliciting whether our suspicion—the latest table-talk—that England is secretly negotiating with Russia for an exchange of Egypt against Stamboul was

[1] Lt.-Col. J. M. Grierson.

well founded or not, I remarked casually—' I know that Lord Salisbury is making some little experiments and efforts about Dardanelles and Egypt, is it so ? ' ' You mean to say, Sir,' said he, ' that we hope by that, that Russia should leave us a free hand in Egypt, if we gave her Constantinople ? ' I. ' Yes.' He. ' Well, you see, Sir, we cannot fight for Stamboul alone, and as the *others won't fight* for it, there is *nobody to help us* ' ! This is as surprising as it is characteristic of the ' perfide Albion ' policy ! According to Salisbury's recent remark, the ' others ' mean, first and foremost, *Austria ! !* Finally I said to him : ' If that is England's decision, it is the reversal of its Mediterranean policy, which for us " others " is the corner-stone of European politics, and I hope you won't do that behind our backs, without giving us " others " notice ! '

[The reported conversation is in English in the text.]

XII. 74

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON ROTENHAN, GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 22nd*, 1897

The British Ambassador made me the following confidential communication to-day :

Count Goluchovski,[1] whom he knows intimately, speaking ' as a friend ', had expressed doubts about England's policy in the East. Formerly England had recognised three principles, which she was ready to defend with all her strength :—

Constantinople to remain Turkish, the Straits to remain closed, and the *status quo* to be maintained in the Mediterranean.

It was doubtful whether the *present* British Cabinet still held fully to these principles or would fight for them, and it was a good deal to be feared that it was not disinclined to unite with Russia in other directions.—If, however, England was not ready to defend the Straits herself,—if, in the event of a Russian attack, she did not at the start send her squadron together with the Italian fleet to Constantinople, to operate there jointly with Austria-Hungary (and perhaps the Triple Alliance), Austria could not and would not act alone in defence of Constantinople and the Straits. Thus, it was important, above all things, to understand clearly now what the British plans were.

Sir F. Lascelles had replied at once to Count Goluchovski that there was a tendency amongst other States also to come to an understanding with Russia. To me he expressed his astonishment that the substance of Count Goluchovski's words, and indeed, his very expressions, agreed so nearly with those used by the Emperor to himself, the Ambassador, about a year before.

[1] On a visit to Berlin, January 16th–19th, 1897.

His conclusion was that His Majesty must have spoken in a similar manner to the Austrian statesman; the latter possessed a great gift of assimilation.

German Note.

The records contain no reference to any conversation between the Emperor and Sir Frank Lascelles on the Eastern question at the beginning of 1896. Did the Ambassador refer to a detailed conversation that he had with the Emperor in the evening of March 3rd, 1896,[1] or to the later one on August 27th, 1896, which was entirely devoted to the Eastern question?[2] The Emperor's views, as developed in conversation with Colonel Swaine, the Military Attaché, on December 20th, 1895,[3] bear a striking likeness to Count Goluchovski's expressions to Sir Frank.

Sir Frank Lascelles has reported the conversation fully to London.

In the course of the conversation, which followed on the Ambassador's remarks, I mentioned that a few years ago (November, 1895) Lord Salisbury indicated to us confidentially that, given certain eventualities, he could send the British Mediterranean squadron at once against the Dardanelles, and that it could easily force them. Now, however, the Prime Minister seems to hold a different opinion.

On this Sir Frank Lascelles related to me the following circumstance, which he had learned from a reliable, though not an official source.

A few months ago [August, 1896] Lord Salisbury intended to send the Mediterranean squadron into the Dardanelles, on account of the Armenian question. At a Cabinet meeting the First Lord of the Admiralty (G. J. Goschen) asked whether Lord Salisbury knew what the French fleet would do in this case; on being answered in the negative, he declared that he could not give the requisite orders to the British squadron, for if the French fleet was lying in front of the Dardanelles after they had been forced, the British would be caught in a trap and would be able to obtain neither munitions nor food.

Lord Salisbury replied angrily: 'If your ships are built of china, I must evidently form another policy.'

The British Ambassador said finally that in a couple of years England would have caught up with the progress of the French navy. The Russian ship-building was proceeding very slowly.

XII. 76

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *January 29th*, 1897

Cipher. Extract.

As our conversation proceeded, Lord Salisbury said that he was well used to having his policy treated with suspicion, and

[1] Cf. p. 422. [2] Cf. p. 432. [3] Cf. p. 359.

only asked when he came into the Office, if a fresh object of suspicion had not been discovered. Still, it had surprised him to find that now even Austria was mistrustful. On my enquiring—in what respect, he gave me to understand that it was suspected *in Berlin*, that he, Lord Salisbury, had come to an understanding with Russia regarding the East. I replied at once that, if I equally could imagine a grievance, I should rather charge him, Lord Salisbury, with a little flirtation with our common friend, Baron de Courcel. Lord Salisbury definitely denied this, on the grounds that an understanding between the two countries could not be carried out in practice ; but he admitted with a smile that quite lately he had again had a long and confidential conversation with Baron de Courcel, and had been kept by him for an hour and a half. . . .

XII. 265

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *February 4th*, 1897

I found Lord Salisbury at his reception yesterday little inclined to talk, and he showed unwillingness to discuss in detail the work of the Ambassadors' conference in Constantinople and its chances of an early success. He merely remarked shortly that they had not yet got so far, and that no conclusion of the work of the Conference could be expected before the end of the following week. Sir Philip Currie was telling him very little of the details of the negotiations. My comment on this is, that I learn from a reliable informant, that Sir Philip Currie has been expressly instructed to spare the Premier questions of detail, since he only thinks the final result important. Yesterday, Lord Salisbury said to me rather brusquely : ' One thing is certain, and that is, that the Sultan will not receive a single shilling with British consent, until he has made the necessary concessions.' I remarked that according to the papers, the Sultan was now somewhat milder, and ready for any concessions. Lord Salisbury said that only *actual* concessions could be considered, which would considerably diminish the Sultan's power.

Regarding Russia, the Minister now expressed complete conviction that she was acting in full and genuine agreement with the other Powers in Constantinople. The fact was that, although Baron Calice, as Doyen, ought to be taking the lead at the conference, M. de Nelidoff was the real leader in the sense agreed upon by the Powers.

Although Lord Salisbury related these circumstances with particular satisfaction, he explained, at the same time, that serious difficulties must still be expected in Constantinople, after the Ambassadors' labours were concluded. The Minister was in a

discouraged mood, and let fall the remark that he would not regard it as a misfortune, if England were politically isolated for a period. I imagine that this discouragement is connected with his realisation that Austria will not permit herself to be exploited, and that the prospect—if it ever existed—of reaching an agreement with Russia or France is now a very small one.

XII. 78

THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, TO COUNT ZU EULENBURG, IN VIENNA, *February 6th*, 1897

Herr von Szögyény informed me in confidence . . . that Count Deym had recently questioned Lord Salisbury as to what England would do, supposing Russia moved against the Dardanelles. . . .

In reply Lord Salisbury seems at first to have expressed characteristically a certain amount of disappointment, because Germany was not unconditionally behind Austria in the Straits question. He then took trouble to explain to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador that, although the British Government would undertake no obligation now, it was far from renouncing interest in the Straits question for good and all. The Vienna Cabinet would be very wrong in assuming it as certain that England would take no part in a conflict over the Straits, and in directing its policy accordingly.

How deeply the British Minister felt it, when he realised that the Vienna Cabinet is not willing, or at any rate, no longer willing, to follow England's Eastern policy without a settled programme and a firm agreement, is shown by his words, as reported by Count Hatzfeldt from London on January 29th. . . .[1]

Whenever it suits him to overawe or entice other Cabinets, Lord Salisbury lets one or other of these understandings appear or disappear over the horizon. The main point, which can give a lead to the policy of those continental Powers which are most interested in the Straits question, is the declaration, which the Austro-Hungarian representative forced the British Premier to make—that under no circumstances would England pledge her policy in advance. The inconsistency between this statement and the conscious and consistent efforts of the London Cabinet to produce a state of war in the East, and with it a condition of stress for certain continental Cabinets, especially for Russia, Austria-Hungary and Germany, is so crude, that Lord Salisbury may well be disquieted, but should not be surprised by any symptoms of suspicion he may in consequence meet with in the Cabinets of Berlin and Vienna. Count Goluchovski's energetic

[1] Cf. p. 443.

action, however, in spite of all sympathy for England, has forced Lord Salisbury to show his colours officially, and in so doing, has done a welcome service to the Triple Alliance. . . .

It would be blindness not to recognise that, quite apart from her wishes and desires, the mere existence of England is a valuable factor in the European balance. In many respects, she is a lightning-conductor. Without identifying ourselves as closely with the existence of the British Empire as we do with that of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, we yet consider it to be a useful political element, and we regret that the want of moderation and other defects of British policy are of a kind to produce general enmity against England. In clear recognition of the advantages accruing from England, His Majesty's Government confines itself, in dealing with British mistakes, to a purely defensive attitude. It is moreover ready, and indeed anxious, as our action in the Far East showed last year, to advance along with England, wherever we consider that our interests coincide with hers. At the time, however, in the Far East, where her co-operation would have worked in a manner equalising, and therefore favourable to all parties, including England herself, England chose to pursue the same policy of the free hand, as she is now doing in the Mediterranean—a policy only to be explained by the supposition that England hopes that her interests will be defended to the last by other Powers, without co-operation by herself. This supposition is for us no reason for being hostile, but it is a reason for very great caution, and I should be greatly reassured, if I knew that I was at one with Count Goluchovski in recognising this, at a moment when we are ourselves at the beginning of a more active period of history.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE CRETAN QUESTION, MAY, 1896–NOVEMBER, 1898. GERMANY AND TURKEY

[In the spring of 1896 an insurrection of the Christians in Crete broke out against the Turks. The Powers immediately sent war-ships to the island and whilst insisting on the retention of the Turkish authority and on abstention by Greece from any form of intervention, they urged moderation on the Sultan, and obtained a promise of a constitution for Crete. Up till the end of 1896, the Greek Government held its hand, in spite of popular pressure in Greece. Lord Salisbury, although anxious not to dissociate himself from the rest of the Powers, was unable to ignore the strong Grecophil sentiment which inspired both Parliament and people in England, and so was unable to endorse openly all that was proposed regarding coercive measures against Greece.]

XII. 155

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *May 26th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

Lord Salisbury being absent, the Under-Secretary (Sir Thomas Sanderson) came to me to-day, and read me a number of telegrams about Crete, some of them confused and unclear. He thinks that the news in the papers on the subject is *somewhat* exaggerated, but he considers the matter to be serious, if only on account of Turkey's increasing financial stress. He regards it, however, as a reassuring symptom, that the Greek Government has behaved correctly so far, and has yielded to the British Minister in Athens [1] in so far as to abstain from sending ships to Crete. But he added that, owing to public opinion, the Greek Government would not be able to dissociate itself entirely from events in Crete. I reminded Lord Salisbury that, on former occasions, representations by the Powers had succeeded in deterring the Greek Government from taking undesirable steps, and he said that it might not now be quite so easy to make a blockade of Greece, which was apparently calculated only to help the Turks, acceptable to public opinion here.

A British war-ship arrived off Canea this morning, and a ship from France, Italy and Russia, respectively, is expected.

[1] Edwin Edgerton.

Lord Salisbury can hardly be back here by the end of the week, and perhaps not till Monday.

XII. 155

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *May 29th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

If serious complications, resulting from the situation in Crete are to be avoided, I think that, above all, energetic language must be used in Athens, and an attempt made to induce England to take part. Once it is settled, and it is publicly known that the Great Powers are determined to forbid intervention by Greece, it may be assumed that the movement in Crete will gradually subside, even though it may have been started and maintained from outside.

XII. 160

BARON VON SAURMA, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *June 16th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

At a meeting of the Ambassadors to-day, we were unanimously of opinion that the good offices, requested of the Powers by the Porte, might undoubtedly be extended to the following four points:

1. An immediate cessation of hostilities on both sides;
2. An early meeting of the National Assembly;
3. Support of the rights demanded by the Cretans on the basis of the Convention of Halepa;
4. A general amnesty for the inhabitants of Candia.

The text of the proclamation follows by post. This was not considered by the Ambassadors quite satisfactory, especially as regards the point that before beginning negotiations with the Cretans, they must be completely subdued. The Greeks would never agree to this.

German Note.

By the Convention of Halepa, of October 15th, 1878, Mukhtar Pacha, who was sent to suppress the disturbances in Crete, granted considerable concessions to the inhabitants, such as the summoning of a Provincial Assembly, consisting of Christian and Mohamedan deputies, financial independence, etc. But the Treaty was never fully carried out; in fact, the Porte replaced it in 1889 by a statute, which greatly restricted the rights of the Cretan National Assembly.

XII. 164

BARON VON SAURMA, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *June 24th*, 1896

Cipher.

From conversations with the Russian and French representatives here, I have more and more the impression that the sympathy of their Governments for Greece has been growing, and likewise, their resentment against Turkey for her high-handed treatment of the Christians in Crete.

The British Chargé d'Affaires, however, is maintaining an attitude of extreme reserve.

It looks as if his Government is lurking under cover, in order later on to come forward suddenly, after the situation has shaped itself, and to attain its own special objects, which at present are not known. (The EMPEROR: '*It is fairly indifferent to us, under which misgovernment the Cretans suffer; it can hardly be worse for them under the Hellenes, than under the Turks. The Tsar was quite right, when he said to Constantine—"As far as I am concerned, you can have it as you will."*')

XII. 177

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 7th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

To-day in our confidential conversation, Lord Salisbury entirely agreed that, in the interests of peace, the Powers must prevent any further development of the Cretan question, and must, therefore, deter Greece from showing favour to the insurgents. He also indicated to me in confidence that, if further steps in this direction were necessary, he would not dissociate himself from them, even if the Powers considered something like a fresh blockade necessary.

The Prime Minister spoke to the Austrian Ambassador in the same sense yesterday.

Owing to the prevailing anti-Turkish feeling here, which is, moreover, frequently expressed in the House of Commons, Lord Salisbury wishes to be spared all possible official papers, which would have to be laid before Parliament and might be used for attacks against the Government.

XII. 187

BARON VON ROTENHAN, FOREIGN OFFICE, TO TSCHIRSCHKY, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES IN ST. PETERSBURG, *July 28th*, 1896

Telegram. Extract.

His Majesty, the Emperor, has empowered the German Government to consent to the Austrian proposal, which is as follows:

1. To declare, by a collective note, to the Greek Government that seeing that it has announced its inability to prevent support by Greece of the rising in Crete, the Powers will find themselves obliged to grant the Turks a militarily free hand.

2. To have the coast of Crete watched by ships belonging to the Powers, to prevent the introduction of men and war material for the rising. . . .

XII. 190

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 29th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

Private for Baron von Holstein.

To-day Lord Salisbury repeatedly argued that he had the same doubts regarding the combined blockade by the six squadrons, which he had already expressed to me on the 25th against any form of concentration of these ships. He could not set aside his anxiety, lest it might lead to disputes and conflicts between the participating Powers. I replied by asking him directly whether, if it had been a question of a mandate to *one* Power, he would have undertaken it. He did not say yes or no, but merely spoke generally of difficulties, of the universal suspicions of England, and I gained the impression that he did not dislike the suggestion. When I asked what the British ships would do if the others undertook the blockade, he said that they would calmly look on.

Failing further indications from you, I shall for the present avoid introducing the subject with Lord Salisbury. I consider that it should be shown him that no one cares particularly whether he participates or not. I said to him to-day that the suspicions of which he complained would merely be strengthened by his abstention, and that will be enough to begin with.

If the blockade does not now come into effect, even without England, I cling to my opinion that our best course will be to withdraw from the affair altogether.

XII. 204

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *August 18th*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

The Austrian Chargé d'Affaires yesterday communicated here a proposal by Count Goluchovski, that the Consuls in Crete shall form a Commission, which, seeing that the Turkish Commissioner and the insurgents are unwilling to negotiate together, shall mediate between the two parties.

Sir Thomas Sanderson, the Under-Secretary, informs me that Lord Salisbury telegraphed to-day from Walmer Castle, that he agrees with the Austrian proposal, if the other Powers also agree with it, and this was communicated to the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires.

XII. 205

BARON VON SAURMA, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *August 21st*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

All the Cabinets have now instructed their representatives here to start the mediation negotiations, in accordance with the scheme worked out by us. We, the Ambassadors, have informed the Porte of this, with a request to let us know when it is ready to begin the work in conjunction with us.

[The mediation proposals were transmitted in the form accepted by the Sultan to Berlin on August 22nd, 1896, and were accepted by the Cretan deputies on September 5th. They provided for almost complete autonomy. Necessary reforms were to be introduced with the assistance of European advisers. The last Article (No. 14) read as follows:

'Les Puissances s'assureront auprès de la Sublime Porte de l'exécution de toutes ces dispositions.']

German Note.

Now that the Cretan National Assembly had received the reform-irade, issued by the Sultan on the basis of the Ambassadors' mediation proposals, the rising in Crete for the moment came to an end. However it broke out again early in January, 1897, and led on to the Greco-Turkish War.

XII. 309

German Note.

From the beginning of January, 1897, onwards, there were fresh outbreaks in the island of Crete, which were aggravated by pan-Hellenist enthusiasm in Greece even more strongly than in 1896. There were several demonstrations in Athens, for the purpose of forcing the Government to take sides with the Cretan rebels. The Greek Government, being unable to control the movement, began by sending on February 6th a war-ship and a transport ship to Crete, on the pretence of protecting the Greek inhabitants. On the 8th, however, she proceeded to mobilise her fleet, and on the 10th caused the torpedo-boat division, commanded by Prince George, to follow the first ships. The Great Powers who, on their side, strengthened their naval forces in Cretan waters—Germany ordering S.M.S. *Kaiserin Augusta* on the 8th to proceed from Wilhelmshaven to Crete—did all in their power to extinguish the conflagration. . . .

King George I of Greece was a son of King Christian IX of Denmark, and also brother of the Dowager Empress of Russia, Maria Feodorovna, the mother of the Tsar Nicholas II. The relationship between the British and Greek Courts was also a close one, for the Princess of Wales was a sister of King George. But whilst the straight course of Russian policy, in particular, was, as the following documents show, greatly prejudiced by these relationships, German policy—though William II, by the marriage

of his sister Sophie, who was the wife of the Greek Crown Prince Constantine, was closely related to the Greek Royal House—was not in any way influenced by personal motives in its general principle that Greece should be restrained from any war-like complications with Turkey, which might easily have let loose a continental war.

XII. 319

THE CHANCELLOR TO THE GERMAN AMBASSADORS IN LONDON, ST. PETERSBURG, PARIS, VIENNA AND ROME, *February 13th*, 1897

Telegram.

The messages received here from all the Great Powers, leave no doubt that they agree in desiring to guard against any present disturbance of European peace, as a result of the events in Crete. It is intended, therefore, to instruct the commanders of the different naval forces to act jointly, for the purpose of preventing the Greek ships from doing anything to assist or encourage the rebellion. In certain quarters the possibility has been considered, of causing the crews to occupy certain points in the island, for the restoration of tranquillity, until the affair is settled.

His Majesty's Government is prepared to take part in the above-mentioned measures solely and entirely in the interests of peace, whilst His Majesty has decided that all other considerations, even those of a dynastic nature, are to be disregarded. But the action contemplated by the Powers will only conduce to peace, if it is undertaken with the settled program of leaving Crete within the scope of Turkish suzerainty. Supposing Crete to be separated now from the Ottoman Empire, there is, as we know, sufficient inflammable matter collected elsewhere to afford a sure prospect of a conflict on a large scale. Perhaps then, a proposal might be made at the psychological moment, that a European congress might assemble and deliberate on a further partition of Turkish territory, in the attempt to avoid or circumscribe such a conflict. In my opinion, however, the chance of maintaining peace, in face of the many passions aroused by the emancipation of Crete, would be so small, that, in order to avoid sharing responsibility for the results, the German Government will withdraw from all further participation in the action of the Powers, from the moment when it becomes evident that keeping the island as a part of the Ottoman Empire no longer forms part of the European program.

At a suitable opportunity, you will see to it that there is no doubt as to our views.

German Note.

Colonel Vassos, Aide-de-camp to the King of Greece, landed in Crete on February 16th, 1897, with 1,500 regular troops, and, on the same day, announced by proclamation his occupation of the island in the King's name.

By the 15th, there was already at Canea, with the consent of the Turkish authorities, a detachment consisting of 100 Russians, 100 French, 100 British, 100 Italians and 50 Austrians. On the 21st, 95 men landed at Canea, from the German cruiser *Kaiserin Augusta*, which had arrived off Crete in the meanwhile.

XII. 325

BARON VON SAURMA, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *February 14th*, 1897

Cipher telegram.

Sir Philip Currie has been empowered by Lord Salisbury 'to take part in all and any diplomatic action which is agreed upon by his colleagues, in regard to the Cretan question'.

We therefore decided to propose the following to our Governments:

'In order to protect Crete from all illegal acts of violence on the part of Greece, the 26 war-ships lying off Crete should land detachments of marines in the principal towns and at other suitable points, and thus receive the island into a kind of trust of the Great Powers, who would thereby gain the time necessary to deliberate on an acceptable solution of the Cretan question.

'This decision to be communicated to the Greek Government, with a warning to abstain from all aggressive action; the same to be communicated at the same time to the Porte, as a reply to the Circular applying to the Powers for intervention.'

XII. 327

[The Emperor addressed to the Austrian, the British and, apparently, to the Russian Ambassadors a proposal to blockade the Piraeus.]

German Note.

. . . Regarding the Emperor's visit to him, the British Ambassador, on February 14th, reported to his Government as follows: 'His Majesty expressed the strongest opinion that the Powers should adopt vigorous measures against the Greek ships, and that the Piraeus should be blockaded, if such a step was necessary.' . . .[1]

[The following telegram contains the Chancellor's official proposals on the subject.]

XII. 329

THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, TO THE AMBASSADORS IN LONDON, VIENNA, ROME, PARIS AND ST. PETERSBURG, *February 17th*, 1897

Telegram.

Supplementary to my telegram of February 15th[2] our Ambassadors with all the Great Powers are receiving the following telegraphic instructions:

[1] English in text. [2] Not given.

According to the telegraphic reports received here yesterday and to-day, of the Greek Government's official declaration of its intention to take possession of Crete, and also in view of the continued despatch of troops to the island, an actual state of war has begun between Greece and Turkey.

For the purpose of depriving the Greek Government of the conviction—which is the foundation of its actions—that, in case of need, it can rely on the support of certain of the Powers, and, on the other hand, of removing the alternative—either that the Turkish Government accepts the challenge to fight, or that Mussulman fanaticism seizes the opportunity for a rising with incalculable results—the individual measures, recommended in my above-mentioned telegram, are insufficient.

If the Powers seriously desire to avoid an outbreak, they will be forced in their joint action to strike harder and closer to the centre of the Greek movement. Amongst the measures promising a satisfactory result, I consider a joint blockade of the Greek ports to be the simplest and, relatively, the least violent.

In consideration of the large number of ships available, the efficient carrying out of the measures of more local importance, which are intended for the waters and coasts of Crete, would not be affected.

Whilst discussing the foregoing, you will be able to gain an impression whether the maintenance of Crete within the Turkish Empire still forms an integral part of the program of action of the Government. This point is, as you will see in my circular instruction of February 13th, a *conditio sine qua non* of our further participation.

XII. 331

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *February 17th*, 1897

Cipher telegram. Extract.

In a long conversation, which I had with Lord Salisbury before I received your telegram of to-day's date, I spoke, nevertheless, in the sense of it and used every effort to convince him of the correctness of our views, and I tried finally, at least to find out what his intentions were with regard to Greece and Crete.

First of all, Lord Salisbury declared that we were much too hasty, that, considering the excitement now reigning in Greece, a blockade of the Piraeus would merely result in driving the Greeks to advance into Macedonia, and that it would, therefore, be better to wait, until passions had died down more. . . .

I said that matters had gone too far, and that I wished very much, therefore, to learn what he really desired in Crete. Lord

Salisbury said that he considered it out of the question eventually to deliver Crete to the Turks, only safeguarded by the concessions to which the Sultan had, so far, consented. His idea was to make the island a privileged province, living under a Wali carefully chosen by the Powers, but still attached to Turkey. The Wali should be neither a Greek nor a Turk, and should not be under the Sultan's authority. Further pressure from me elicited the fact that Lord Salisbury imagines a future position for Crete, similar to that of Bulgaria. When I asked whether he had in mind someone like Battenberg for Wali, Lord Salisbury did not deny it in the least. . . .

Lord Salisbury begged me not yet to mention in Berlin anything of what he had said about his wishes for Crete, i.e., a Wali, as far as possible independent of the Sultan, and I beg you not to mention this point to Sir Frank Lascelles at present.

[On March 5th, 1897, the Sultan offered the Cretans autonomy under Turkish suzerainty. The offer was rejected at once, and the Admirals, commanding the squadrons off Crete, drew up a scheme for coercing Crete into submission. Lord Salisbury was not in favour of pushing things to extremes, as appears in the following extract:]

XII. 357

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *March 8th*, 1897

Cipher telegram. Extract.

. . . Lord Salisbury added *very confidentially* that I could be sure that the suspicion felt against him on the Continent had no real foundation. He wished neither to help the Greeks, nor to pursue other objects, but he understood his fellow-countrymen and knew that if he acted now too hastily and harshly, he would excite public opinion again, which had already calmed down concerning Greece, most violently and find it against him. (The EMPEROR: '*It is so already.*') Let our object be and remain the same as before; his only wish was that it should be allowed to follow a rather slower course. (The EMPEROR: '*If Salisbury had his way, no course would be followed at all! These are mere evasions!*') . . .

XII. 363

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON MARSCHALL, *March 11th*, 1897

Extract.

The British Ambassador communicated to me in confidence to-day a telegram from Lord Salisbury to the British Ambassador in St. Petersburg:

'In consideration of the difficulties offered by the pacification of Crete, it should be discussed whether it would not be a good

thing to leave a part of the Greek troops in the island under the command of foreign officers, as a police force, to restore order and tranquillity. An advantage of the proposal would be, that it would soothe Greek *amour propre*; moreover, it would be difficult for the Powers to assemble a sufficient number of troops in the island, to carry out complete pacification.'

I declared to the Ambassador that, even without first asking for instructions, I considered myself empowered to describe this proposal as unacceptable to the Imperial Government. (The EMPEROR: '*Correct.*') All the commanding officers of the Great Powers had ascertained, that it was, in fact, the appearance of Greek troops in the island, that had increased the anarchy there. (The EMPEROR: '*Yes.*') . . .

[The next question to be decided was which Power or Powers should provide the force, which was to police the island. The Powers concerned in this were England, France, Russia and Italy. In the end, all four Powers sent detachments, which occupied the coast towns, until Crete joined Greece in 1910.]

German Note.

According to a telegram of March 17th, 1897, Lord Salisbury, in earlier conversations with Count Hatzfeldt, had always said that either a British or a Russian occupation would be out of the question; Russia would certainly veto England, and he supposed that England would do the same in the case of Russia. Judging from Salisbury's utterances, the German Ambassador was inclined to think that Salisbury's inmost desire was to obtain a mandate for occupation for himself alone.

XII. 371

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *March 17th*, 1897

Cipher telegram.

Lord Salisbury, whom I only saw for a short time to-day, spoke very frankly about yesterday's Cabinet meeting and its result. Those Ministers, who, like Goschen, Balfour and several others, had Greek sympathies, remained this time unshakable, and he had been unable to overcome them.

The leading principle of these gentlemen, who knew very little about foreign politics, and against whom he had had to struggle for a long time past, was that England must be associated with *no* measures, which could be described here as actual support of Turkey. . . .

According to his information, the situation now was that the French and Italians did not desire to undertake the occupation. Thus there was nothing left but Russia and England. I asked what attitude public opinion here would probably adopt towards an occupation exclusively Russian, as foreshadowed in his note [to Russia, March 16th—not given]. At first the Minister replied

that he believed that this would meet with no particular objection here; but he added that he did not think Russia would agree to a military occupation, either by herself or jointly with England, in which case nothing would be left but for England to undertake the task herself.

I once again called the Minister's attention to the news in to-day's papers of the very imminent danger of a conflict on the Greco-Turkish frontier, and asked him what he considered would happen then. He was silent for a moment and then said: 'We shall probably continue to be lookers-on.'

The French Ambassador this afternoon had a very long conversation with Lord Salisbury. According to the latter, he gave it as his opinion that it would be amply sufficient, if some of the Powers sent some men, who would stay in the coast towns, as they have been doing so far, and that more extensive measures would be superfluous. . . .

I consider it to be urgently recommended that we and Austria use all our influence in St. Petersburg, so that Russia may decide either to undertake the occupation of Crete herself or, if her objections to this are insuperable, to accept occupation jointly with England. On hearing this proposal, Count Muravieff will sufficiently understand that it is not to Russia's interest for Crete to fall into the hands of the British, who would scarcely withstand the temptation of making for themselves there a new and strong base against future eventualities in the Mediterranean.

[It was held by the Russian Foreign Office that an effective blockade of the Greek ports, including Volo, might have prevented the Greeks from supplying their army on the frontier, and so have made them withdraw their challenge to Turkey. The British Cabinet opposed a blockade of Volo. It agreed, however, to make certain concessions.]

XII. 383

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *March 24th*, 1897

Telegram.

The British Ambassador handed in the following communication to-day:

'In order to preserve peace on the Macedonian frontier, Admiral Harris will be ordered to join in a blockade of the Greek coasts, if the Admirals decide upon it. In the carrying out of this measure, the blockade of Volo will not be performed by our ships, but by those of the continental Powers. At the same time, Great Britain will join with the other Powers in demanding that the Greek forces, as well as the Turkish, withdraw to a convenient distance from the frontier. She will herself also inform the Porte that she will regard the crossing of the frontier by Turkish forces as a hostile act.' . . .

XII. 386

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO COUNT HATZFELDT, *March 26th*, 1897

Telegram.

Lord Salisbury's latest proposal has been unfavourably received in St. Petersburg and Paris. England's habit of coming forward at the last moment, with fresh objections and conditions, is regarded in both places as an effort to stop all action. M. Hanotaux said to Count Wolkenstein[1]: ' C'est la fin du concert européen.' . . .

Count Muravieff is especially irritated, because, owing to the British hesitations, the Greeks will have been able to bring up all their reserves by way of Volo.

The possibly exaggerated mistrust of England which is shown in France and Russia, is making a favourable result difficult. But we must first wait for what the meeting between Salisbury and Hanotaux brings forth.

German Note.

This meeting took place in Paris on March 26th.

[To a despatch written by Baron von Plessen, German Minister in Athens, to Prince Hohenlohe (March 28th, 1897), which argued that, if the naval plans had been promptly carried out, much of the present troubles might have been prevented, the EMPEROR appended the following minute :]

This again makes it clear how painfully Germany suffers from the *lack* of a *strong navy*, since she cannot make herself effectively felt in the Concert. If, instead of one ship, we had had a strong division of armoured cruisers off Crete, Germany would have been able promptly to blockade Athens in February with her own forces *unaided*, and so have forced the other Powers to co-operate with her *nolens volens*. The end of it now is that nothing has been done, and the one who has countered every plan and paralysed all power of action, and whose wishes therefore every one treated with consideration, is England! And why? *Because she has the strongest fleet!* Our million Grenadiers are *no* help to us in this!

German Note.

On April 2nd, 1897, Saurma, in Constantinople, reported that the Ambassadors had exchanged opinions as to the autonomy to be granted to Crete. ' They considered that a condition might be contemplated for the island, somewhat similar to Bulgaria's, with the selection of a Governor-General—the Prince—by the people's representatives, with the consent of the Powers.' This indicated the possibility of the choice of Prince George of Greece, as sovereign Prince of Crete, ' a combination which seemed especially welcome to the Russian Ambassador.'

[In a telegram (April 2nd) Count Hatzfeldt described this proposal as being ' unbelievably unpractical '. The last paragraph of the same telegram ran as follows :]

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[1] Austrian Ambassador in Paris.

XII. 400

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *April 11th*, 1897

Extract. Private for the Secretary of State.

. . . As things are now, the desire is to wait and see whether the rebel incursion [across the frontier] leads to a state of war between Turkey and Greece. As Sir Donald [Mackenzie] Wallace[1] recently assured me, it will not be easy for the British Cabinet to make the blockade still acceptable here. It would therefore be of the utmost importance for ourselves and Austria to urge the Sultan with all our weight and without loss of time, to direct his troops to repel all attacks by the Greek irregulars, but at present in no case to overstep the frontier, until there is no longer any doubt that the Greek regular army has begun to attack.

German Note.

Curzon went to Berlin for a short visit in April, 1897.[2]

XII. 408

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON MARSCHALL, *April 17th*, 1897

This afternoon I held a long political conversation with Mr. Curzon, Under-Secretary of State.[3] As regards the Greek question, his utterances revealed nothing new of importance. He tried earnestly to justify the hesitating attitude, adopted by the London Cabinet towards the question of blockading of Greek ports. In dealing with this point, Lord Salisbury had had to reckon with the phil-Hellenic tendencies in the country, which had permitted *action* by England against Greece, but not action *in favour of* Turkey. From this point of view, a blockade of Volo, which Lord Salisbury himself had contemplated for a time, had become impossible, for it was by way of Volo, that the Greeks had assembled their troops and completed the delivery of munitions and stores. I objected that the present action on the coast of Crete had been much more in Turkey's favour, than was a blockade of the Greek coasts, for there British ships had fired on the Greek insurgents (March 25th) in defence of the Turks. Mr. Curzon admitted this and said that the whole situation there was as uncomfortable as it could be. Again, when I asked what was thought in England of the further development of affairs, he replied that it was incomprehensible to him, why the Turks on

[1] Director of the Foreign department of *The Times*. Cf. Lee, *King Edward VII*, I, 494.

[2] The Hon. George N. Curzon, M.P.

[3] Cf. Lord Ronaldshay's *Life of Curzon*, I, 266 et seq.

the Thessalian border did not act in earnest and march to Larissa. . . .

German Note.

On April 18th, 1897, Turkey declared war on Greece. From the start, the war turned out as unfavourably for Greece as could be conceived. On April 25th Larissa fell into the hands of the Turks.

XII. 412

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO TSCHIRSCHKY, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES IN ST. PETERSBURG, *May 1st*, 1897

Telegram.

Yesterday the Russian Ambassador brought to my knowledge the following telegram from Count Muravieff:

'La Reine d'Angleterre s'est adressée à l'Empereur, notre Auguste Maître, en suggérant l'idée de faire amener conclusion d'un armistice entre les belligérants par les trois Puissances garantes de la Grèce (Russie, France et Angleterre). Sa Majesté serait tout disposée à appuyer une démarche dans le but indiqué, mais elle estime, que cette dernière devrait être faite par toutes les Grandes Puissances.

'Il nous semblerait indispensable de sonder préalablement les dispositions du Gouvernement grec qui pourrait encore ne pas vouloir d'une médiation. D'un autre côté, nous apprenons par Nélidow que le Sultan ne serait pas disposé à accueillir une médiation des Grandes Puissances, mais préférerait une démarche auprès de lui de la part du Gouvernement Hellénique.'

Having obtained His Majesty's sanction, I have replied to-day that there would only be an object in mediation, if, *before* an armistice and *before* mediation began, the Greeks would declare their agreement with the long-known proposals of the Powers, regarding Cretan autonomy and the recall of Vassos. Failing these conditions, we consider all mediation to be pointless, and we should see no object in participating in it. But we should feel neither envy nor jealousy if others entertain different opinions and are desirous of making an attempt at mediation.

XII. 412

TSCHIRSCHKY, IN ST. PETERSBURG, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *May 1st*, 1897

Confidential.

The individual action, recently undertaken here by England —the proposal for a Conference of the three Powers, England, France and Russia, to settle the Greek question—has naturally made a great sensation in well-informed circles here. Moreover,

the proposal has not been without influence on the political results of the meeting of the Emperors.

German Note.

The Emperor Francis Joseph stayed in St. Petersburg from the 27th to the 29th of April, 1897.

The British attempt to settle with Russia and France, over the head of Austria-Hungary (The EMPEROR: '*There is nothing new in this.*'), questions which especially affect the Empire on the Danube,—this deceitful blow, dealt on the day before the arrival of the Emperor Francis Joseph in St. Petersburg, and calculated simply to push the Triple Alliance States out of the Areopagus of Europe, will, after it has been parried by the Emperor Nicholas and the Russian Government, have strangled in the Austro-Hungarian statesman the last of the Anglophil feelings which might still survive from the beginning of his official activities (The EMPEROR: '*I hope so?!*') and have made him all the more ready for an unreserved understanding with Russia. . . .

Sir Nicholas O'Conor himself described the affair to me, as if England, from the beginning, had intended a Conference of *all* the Great Powers, and assured me that the proposal had already been accepted by Russia, but that an obstacle had arisen somewhere else—perhaps in Berlin or Vienna. (The EMPEROR: '*Prosit.*') Now it was all settled, and it was a matter of inducing the Athens Government as soon as possible to invite the Powers to intervene. I confined myself to listening to what the British Ambassador had to say, and did not refer to the discrepancies between his description and that of his colleagues.

For Germany the circumstance might, in my humble opinion, offer good results in two directions. First, it will destroy Austria's erroneous belief in England's eventual support of Austria-Hungary and in any community of interests between the two countries in the East (The EMPEROR: '*I have preached this for a long time.*'), and at the same time, it will bring about in Austria a different orientation in Eastern politics, by removing the idea of the supposed irreconcilable antagonism against Russia. Secondly, the circumstance has forced France—even if only perhaps for a time—to suspend her temporising between England and Russia, and to bind herself faster to Russia in Eastern politics, thus isolating England completely. (The EMPEROR: '*Very well written.*')

German Note.

For Turkey's extensive demands, which were at once greatly reduced by the Ambassadors of the Great Powers, see the Turkish Memorandum and the replies of the Ambassadors (June 3rd and 5th) given in *Staatsarchiv*, LXII, 189, 192 et seq. Disappointed in his hopes, the Sultan turned first to the German Emperor. . . .

XII. 423

THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, TO THE EMPEROR WILLIAM, *June 12th*, 1897

Extract.

I respectfully submit to Your Imperial Majesty a Memorandum (enclosed) the contents of which the Turkish Ambassador was instructed to bring under discussion in the Audience, which he requested. In this document, the Sultan's hope is expressed that Your Majesty will help him to obtain as large a war-indemnity as possible, and to recover a part, at least, of Thessaly. . . .

[It was clear, however, that the Powers were pledged to each other to prevent any extension of Turkey's power in Europe, and Germany's rejection of Turkey's appeal was explained by Holstein, as follows :]

XII. 427

BARON VON HOLSTEIN, BERLIN, TO BARON VON SAURMA, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, *July 12th*, 1897

Private.

To-day's telegram [not given] is calculated to remove any hope that the Sultan may still cherish, of our Emperor's ability to intervene diplomatically in favour of the Turkish claims. The Emperor has now declared positively that he is not acting separately from Russia in this question. If Russia seriously pushes matters to extremities—as, according to to-day's telegram from St. Petersburg, Count Muravieff indicated to the Turkish Ambassador—it will be so, because the Russian Government is firmly convinced that we shall not stand in its way.

The Sultan has *never* had cause to conclude from our attitude that we should break away from all Europe in order to bring about the subjection of Christian populations to Turkish domination. By his persistence in making a territorial demand, against which the Emperor earnestly advised him from the beginning, because, in the opinion of all Europe, it was inadmissible, the Sultan has again impaired his position ; but a far greater deterioration is to be expected in the near future, unless he quickly gives way now. Politically the Sultan can only offer resistance in questions on which Europe is divided and the Powers impede each other by taking opposite views. Now, however, the Sultan has made a mistake, astonishing in a statesman who is otherwise so far-seeing,—that of selecting for resistance a question on which there was from the beginning no possibility of doubt that Europe would be united. The German Emperor, who, amongst all the rulers of Europe, probably cherishes most sympathy for the

Sultan, has shown this from the beginning by warning him repeatedly and earnestly against this scheme of expansion.

The foregoing are practical considerations which you should emphasise. In doubtful cases it will always be safer for you to support the program of the St. Petersburg Government. His Majesty feels some suspicion against M. Nelidoff's *personal* ideas. But Currie is more in his black books than any.

[Peace was finally signed at Constantinople on December 4th, 1897. By it, Turkey obtained an indemnity of £4,000,000 in place of the £10,000,000 which she originally demanded, and a slight rectification of frontier. The treaty privileges of Greeks living under the Turkish flag were reduced.]

German Note.

The conclusion of peace between Greece and Turkey settled neither the Greek nor the Cretan question finally . . . The latter question was complicated by fresh disturbances in the island in December, 1897, and it now became necessary to consider the appointment of a Governor-General, in accordance with the Sultan's Irade, regarding the administration of the island, which was accepted by the Cretan National Assembly on September 2nd, 1896; also the retention, or otherwise, of the Turkish troops in the island. There were difficulties in carrying out the statute, by which the Sultan was to appoint a Christian Governor for five years with the assent of the Powers. The Ambassadors' Conference in Constantinople proposed, therefore, on December 3rd, 1897, to establish an interim provisional government in Crete, with a provisional Governor at its head, *to be appointed by the Powers*. A further proposal by the Conference (December 7th) suggested that this provisionally appointed Governor should, together with two delegates of the Ambassadors' Conference, form an organising committee, to work out a definitive organic administrative statute, to take the place of that of September, 1896. The Conference itself at the same time proposed the principles which should underlie such a definitive statute. . . . Who was to be the actual future Governor had been a puzzle ever since 1896. . . . [Various candidates were considered;] the candidature of Prince George of Greece, which now was becoming a diplomatic *pièce de résistance*, had already raised its head in 1896, its chief opponent then being Count Muravieff.

XII. 447

Bernhard von Bülow, in Berlin, to Prince von Radolin, in St. Petersburg, *December 25th*, 1897

Telegram. Extract.

The Russian Ambassador announced here yesterday that, since the Prince of Montenegro had refused his assent to the candidature of the Boyedar Petrovitch, the Russian representative in Constantinople had been instructed to propose Prince George of Greece to the Ambassadors' Conference, as a candidate for the post of provisional Governor of Crete. . . .

XII. 452

COUNT ZU EULENBURG, IN VIENNA, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *January 2nd*, 1898

Confidential.

The candidature of Prince George of Greece receives from my Russian colleague (Count Kapnist) the sharpest possible condemnation. (The EMPEROR: '*Naturally! but it is a comic situation.*') He does not conceal the embarrassment that his Chief's instructions have caused him, and he feels painfully the fluctuations through which Russian policy has recently passed in the questions of the organisation and Governorship of Crete.

My Italian colleague (Count Nigra)—although personally he does not like Prince George's candidature—looks on the changes in the Russian proposals as the essential danger. He asserts that *anything* may be called in question, if a factor of power, such as Russia, came to realise that it could, in fact, do whatever it pleased, and if great ladies were listened to. (The EMPEROR: '*Very true!*')

Sir Horace Rumbold[1] takes Prince George's candidature very easily, 'for it is England's' and at the same time his own choice; ever since his time at Athens, he has respected the Royal Family there. He said to me: 'England has from the start represented the only correct point of view, that of wishing for a thing which cannot be prevented—the union of Crete with Greece.' (The EMPEROR: '*!*') I was able to offer him plenty of arguments, but they will have made hardly as much impression on him as those of Count Goluchovski, who finds the British representative's attitude thoroughly unsympathetic. And in such cases, he is not usually backward in showing his dislikes.

The fact is that here they are bored with constant repetitions, and this is why there is a gradually increasing tendency in favour of a union of the island with Greece.

XII. 457

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *January 13th*, 1898

Extract.

In conversation yesterday, Lord Salisbury just mentioned Crete. He first remarked in confidence that the candidature of Prince George of Greece, which appeared to have been given up as a result of our opposition and Austria's, was really proposed by Count Muravieff, because he hoped in this way to recover the favour of the Empress-Mother of Russia. I obtained the impres-

[1] British Ambassador in Vienna.

sion that Lord Salisbury would have been pleased with the success of this candidature, but that he would have equally approved of that of Voivode Petrovitch. . . .

[The jealousies and disagreements between the Powers on the question as to which of them were to be entrusted with the organisation of the island now became acute. The appointment of Prince George as Governor-General against the wishes of Germany and Austria caused these two Powers, who were the Sultan's chief supporters, to withdraw entirely from participation, leaving England, Italy, Russia and France to settle the affairs of Crete between them.

Baron von Marschall, who had retired from the Foreign Office in 1897 for reasons connected with German domestic politics, was sent in the autumn of that year as Ambassador to Constantinople. He remained there until 1912, and was successful in establishing his country's influence to the extent of making Turkey dependent on Germany, both for her trade and her fighting forces.]

XII. 474

BARON VON MARSCHALL, AMBASSADOR IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 26th*, 1898

Cipher telegram.

Sir Philip Currie informed the Russian Ambassador yesterday that he was instructed to support the candidature of Prince George of Greece.

This fact and the reports that the Prince is very soon about to land in Crete have disturbed the Sultan. He promptly sent to ask me to-day whether I could tell him anything about the Imperial Government's attitude towards that candidature. I sent word to His Majesty that in the Cretan question the Imperial Government continued to pursue the policy which it had adopted from the beginning in the interests of peace.

It is clear that England now desires to bring Prince George's candidature before the Ambassadors' Conference, in order to split the continental Powers (The EMPEROR: '*Right.*'); perhaps they are now realising in St. Petersburg that in proposing that candidature they have been carrying out England's policy. (The EMPEROR: '*Yes.*')

XII. 489

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *February 28th*, 1898

Cipher telegram.

My impression is that Lord Salisbury, whom the idea of a mandate granted to *two* Powers has filled with suspicion as he sees in it a desire to embroil the two with each other and with other Powers, now imagines that he would prefer a mandate to be granted to *one* Power only, although he assumes that this

would never come to pass with the consent of all the Powers. Meanwhile, he is waiting until Russia takes up Prince George's candidature again ; [1] which, although personally he regards it without enthusiasm, is desirable, if only because public opinion here is in favour of it in Greece's interests ; also, because it provides a field for the exercise of a joint policy by England and Russia.

At present I do not think that Lord Salisbury has any territorial schemes in Crete. He is well aware of the suspicion felt by other Powers against England on this point, and will, if I judge him aright, avoid anything that can be held up in justification of this suspicion. But, if I am not altogether wrong, he goes further still and considers it his duty to protect England from any complication in the East, which might lead to difficulties with Russia or France. He sees clearly that other Powers are interested in increasing the suspicion between England and France, and Russia also, in the Mediterranean. It is also to England's interest that the conflict in the East, if it comes, should first break out between Russia and Austria, leaving England with her hands free. I consider that our task is to prevent this eventuality, and at the same time, to keep our own hands free for all that may happen.

XII. 559

BARON VON MARSCHALL, AMBASSADOR IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *March 5th*, 1898

Confidential.

It would be contrary to the natural course of events, if the important position which Germany has been able to acquire here, had not added to the number of those who oppose and envy us, and if our work in maintaining and strengthening our influence here did not meet with an increasing measure of opposition on the part of those whose political and material interest it is to weaken and undermine our position. The great consideration enjoyed by Germany in Turkey, and the warm sympathy which now, after the successful war, is evident far and wide amongst the Turkish population, is an advantage which might easily be lost. It means that we must keep a sharp eye on the fingers of our adversaries and observe carefully the direction of their desires and efforts. It is a fact that the fight against us is being carried on not only by rivals in trade and politics, but that certain influ-

[1] On March 13th Prince Radolin wrote from St. Petersburg : ' Count Muravieff, whom I saw yesterday, spoke again of Prince George's candidature with a fire such as he had scarcely shown before. He said that was the only guarantee for order and tranquillity. . . .'

ential Turks also are against us. With some of them this political tendency is based on the usual arguments which are heard here; but doubtless there are also Turks, who from honest political and religious conviction, consider the predominant influence of a Christian Power injurious to the interests of Turkey and Islam. As I recently reported, the arguments of our opponents may be summed up as follows: 'The Germans wish to exploit Turkey commercially, so as to make as much money as possible; they have fine words and good advice, but if there were serious complications, they would not move a finger to maintain Turkey.' (The EMPEROR: '*The facts of the last war and its results disprove this.*') To prove this, they quote the well-known proverb of the bones of the Pomeranian Grenadier and earlier and more recent official speeches, which announce publicly that Germany possesses no direct political interests in the East whatever.

With this *political* method of argument our opponents will not gain much ground. The Sultan's friendship for, and reliance on His Majesty the Emperor is so firmly rooted, that attempts to arouse suspicion in this direction are *a priori* hopeless. Like every intelligent Turk, the Sultan knows also very well that once serious complications arise, Turkey is always and under all circumstances the losing party, and that the best and most useful friend is therefore the one who tries to keep such complications away from her. Germany can justly claim this merit, for in all disputed questions during the last 20 years, in face of opposition by the Powers more nearly interested, she has successfully thrown the weight of her influence into the scale in favour of Turkish integrity and the *status quo* guaranteed by treaty. It is admitted that in many individual burning questions the Porte often deplored our cautious reserve and wished for a more positive policy, and perhaps, here and there, even tried to compromise us, as allies, in face of other States; but I am convinced that if we relinquished our present line, it would be our fate to be included, from the Turkish point of view, among the States 'which want something', and that would mean losing the special position which we occupy to-day. The Turk understands a policy which openly and honestly declares the limits within which he can do something for his country, better than vague promises of future assistance.

Thus, if our opponents make capital out of our 'lack of interests' in order to make us suspect, they merely betray how grievous that 'lack' is to them, and they prompt us to act on the proverb, 'Find out what the enemy dislikes and do it.' [1]

As regards our commercial efforts, the anger of our opponents is the more comprehensible, since we must in all modesty admit

[1] English in text.

that we owe our success in this domain not only to ourselves alone, but also to the activities of our rivals. A warning example of what French and British speculators have done in the way of shameless exploitation of Turkey is supplied by the construction of railways in the East, the history of the Ottoman Bank, the dealings of the Tobacco Regie, and recently, those of the French Quay Company. The names of Sir Edgar Vincent and Baron Hirsch are typical of the class of financiers who systematically robbed Turkey here, filled their pockets and then turned their backs on the country. It is *their* methods that have prepared the way for honest German enterprise. Now, for this last a sharp line is drawn. German capital must avoid enterprises, involving a large momentary speculative profit at the expense of the country; we must continue to initiate and support only such schemes by which our capital will, of course, make money in the form of increasing dividends, but only by serious work and increasing the prosperity of the country and its inhabitants. Turkey has had personal experience of the difference between these two kinds of enterprise, and I am in the happy position of being able to point, in support of this realisation, to the Anatolian Railway and to the military and commercial services performed by those railways in the East which are mainly under German management. On the other hand, there is apparent the folly of the French Quay Company, which manages its affairs in such a way that trade here is not assisted, but is heavily handicapped. In order to pay big dividends—and be it said, in obvious violation of the capitulations—the Company charges such heavy dues against ships landing cargoes, that the Austrian Lloyd, for instance, has decided to cease putting in here and to anchor in the middle of the Bosphorus instead. Moreover, the Company is neglecting to build warehouses, etc., and thus violating its engagements entered into by agreement with the Porte; it is thus actually responsible for the wretched conditions of the Customs arrangements at this port. I hope that the Anatolian Railway at Haidar Pacha will show the Turks how a port is constructed and managed so as to assist and increase trade.

In the domain of trade the prospect continues to be favourable, and there is plenty of scope for useful future expansion for solid enterprises, employing German capital and German industry. There are—quite apart from special services for the army—railways, ports and bridges to build, electrical works to erect for lighting and tramways, etc., and the really wretched condition of most of the steamers that ply regularly here offers good chances for German competition. We shall naturally not be left alone to do all this, and certain concessions will be granted to others. But one thing we must claim for ourselves, and that is the con-

necting up of the present sphere of interests of the Anatolian Railway with the river districts of the Tigris and Euphrates, and so on to the Persian Gulf. (The EMPEROR: '*Without question.*') Whether or not the Sultan's wish to extend the Anatolian Railway to Bagdad is 'music of the future', a question of the present, especially after recent events in the Far East, is that no one else should get in front of us here. It occurs to me that a scheme might gradually be formed to work from the other end; instead of lengthening the Anatolian Railway, a line might be constructed to meet that railway, starting from Bagdad or some point on the navigable course of the river; the fertility of those parts in the produce of the soil and the population's need of European products, might make such an enterprise profitable. Perhaps this idea might be made to harmonise with the Sultan's desire to apply German capital to making that river navigable and supplying shipping for it. I consider it one of my most important tasks in the domain of commerce to keep this matter before me. (The EMPEROR: '*Yes.*')

It is impossible to speak of the position that Germany occupies here, without mentioning that German policy and German business efforts have not been alone in producing it. A great part of the prestige which we enjoy is due to the German officer and his work. One personality is prominent before all others in giving the Turks ocular proof of German knowledge and ability, General Baron von der Goltz. The Turkish corps of officers knows and realises that the last war was won only as a result of this man's work, and the younger members of the General Staff who were trained in his school only deplore that the supreme command in the war was not inspired by its spirit. If it were possible to introduce here, as his successor, someone approaching him in efficiency, it would be greatly to be welcomed from the political point of view also.

XII. 494

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN BERLIN, TO BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, *March 15th*, 1898

Telegram.

You will inform the Sultan, so far as it can be done in strict confidence, that the recall of the German ship from Crete is in no way to be regarded as a symptom of any decrease of our sympathy for Turkey; on the contrary, His Majesty's Government was induced to it by the thought that a certain levity was occasionally to be remarked in the management of the Cretan question, and that this levity was assisted by the fact that the responsibility for all that happened had to be shared in common by the Euro-

pean Powers. It is to be supposed that once one Power or another refuses to continue sharing the responsibility for the political experiments to be tried in Crete, the Powers that remain will recognise it as a warning to observe greater caution.

For the rest, it is in no way Germany's intention to renounce that participation in questions affecting the East, which is rightfully due to her as a Great Power. His Majesty's Government is especially prepared to use its influence in favour of Turkey, when the question of Turkish reform is next raised, as is to be expected in the near future.

[Towards the end of August, 1898, the Mohamedans in the town of Candia rose against the British troops occupying the town. The disturbances were not put down without bloodshed, nor until the British ships had bombarded the town. It was held that the rising had been aggravated by the presence of the Turkish garrison in the island, and in September its withdrawal was formally demanded. On October 20th, the Emperor urged the Tsar, 'if possible, to find means by which you can save the Sultan from a dangerous and compromising situation *envers ses sujets* and solve the Cretan question in a manner acceptable to him.']

XII. 509

German Note.

. . . The Emperor's appeal had but little effect on the attitude of Russian policy in the Cretan question. Not till December 14th, after Prince George's appointment as High Commissioner of Crete, did Nicholas II reply [in English] to the German Emperor, mentioning jealousy of England as the true reason for Russia's attitude in the Cretan question. 'I am glad that the Cretan question is at last nearing its end. You know the reason why Russia had to take such a prominent part in its solution at the risk of damaging our good and cordial relations with Turkey—the fear of another Power establishing itself on the island, and of course, the wish to put a final stop to the constant bloodshed. There was no other way of settling the question than to send George as High Commissioner of the four Powers—it is a radical measure, but therefore the only one in my opinion. —Our troops shall remain there as long as England keeps hers on the island.'

XII. 510

BARON VON MARSCHALL, IN CONSTANTINOPLE, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *November 28th*, 1898

Extract.

With the appointment of Prince George of Greece as High Commissioner of Crete, a formal solution has been found temporarily for the Cretan question, which has been hanging on for years. The four Powers, which have made themselves responsible for the fate of the island and its inhabitants, will boast of the political wisdom with which they have 'solved' that difficult question in a few months. There will be nothing but rejoicings in Greece over the political success after the gloomy days of the

previous year, and the Cretan Christians can boast of having given all the other discontented elements in the Turkish Empire an example of a successful insurrection. Of course, the Sultan is largely to blame for events so displeasing to himself, but in the eyes of an unprejudiced observer, that cannot alter the opinion that the events in Crete to-day are an immense and grievous act of injustice, which must very deeply offend and embitter the Sultan and the whole Mohamedan world. Last year Turkey fought Greece victoriously about Crete, and now a Greek prince is there in the island in possession of the governing power, and the mission of maintaining order and tranquillity in Turkish territory has been entrusted to the prince of a country which, in all departments of public life, presents a picture of disorder bordering on anarchy. . . .

CHAPTER XXX

ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS. OCTOBER, 1896–MAY, 1897

COLONIAL MATTERS—STRIKE AT HAMBURG—THE TRANSVAAL

German Note.

A report from Richarz, German Consul at Bagdad (October 24th, 1896), stated that a British war-ship had pushed up the Shatt el Arab as far as the Vilayet of Basra, and that a naval demonstration in the Persian Gulf was to be expected.

[This drew from the Emperor an expression of alarm as to the feeling against Germany reigning in England and of fear lest England might one day seize Germany's colonies. His letter in advocation of a Continental league [1] against England continues :]

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM, AT POTSDAM, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *October 25th*, 1896

Cipher telegram. Extract.

. . . Skill and foresight demand, therefore, that we collect friends, if not indeed allies, wherever we can. Negotiations must, therefore, be started at once with St. Petersburg and Paris, the basis of which shall be a mutual guarantee of the present colonial possessions of each Power. There is again further evidence of our folly in starting a colonial policy ten years ago without possessing a fleet, and of developing this policy, without at the same time taking steps to build one. Here we are, saddled with large colonial possessions, which have become a heel of Achilles to the Germany which hitherto has been unassailable by England, since they bring us continuously into complications, smaller or greater, with her, which is sure to advertise sooner or later our complete impotence on the water. Our trade is waging a life and death struggle with that of England, and our Press boasts loudly of this every day, but the great merchant navy which sails all the seas under our flag is quite helpless before the 130 British cruisers, to which we proudly oppose four.

[1] Cf. pp. 366, 372.

XIII. 5

BARON VON MARSCHALL TO THE EMPEROR WILLIAM, *October* [?], 1896

Telegram. Unsigned draft.

Expansion by England in the Persian Gulf would certainly sharpen Franco-Russian hostility against England. The more England is forced to keep a closer watch on the Franco-Russian group, the less danger is there of a British attack on our colonies. A German rapprochement towards the Franco-Russian group is therefore *now*, at any rate, and for this cause not necessary. It would have the two-fold objection, first, of lowering Germany's position by making it look as if she was running after the two Powers, and secondly, it would loosen the Triple Alliance.

German Note.

The above telegram was never despatched, . . . but its purport was discussed with the Emperor orally. It is given here to indicate the attitude of the German Foreign Office. . . .

German Note.

At the end of November, 1896, there was a strike of workmen in the port of Hamburg. The fact that the English Labour leader, Tom Mann, came to Hamburg to take part in the strike movement caused a number of German newspapers, especially the *Hamburger Nachrichten*, to assume that the strike had been started by British shipping companies on purpose and was being supported with British money. The Emperor William feared that this assertion would increase the anti-British feeling in Germany, and he suggested, through Sir Frank Lascelles, that the British Government should officially deny the Press reports of British encouragement for the strike. Lord Salisbury, however, refused to do this.

XIII. 8

THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, TO THE EMPEROR WILLIAM, *November 30th*, 1896

I respectfully forward to Your Majesty a copy of a telegram from Lord Salisbury to Sir Frank Lascelles, which the latter has handed to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with a request to lay it before Your Majesty. Seeing that the German Government did not approach the London Cabinet on the subject of the strike at Hamburg, Lord Salisbury's negative reply can only refer to a personal communication from Your Majesty to the British Ambassador.

XIII. 9

Enclosure

LORD SALISBURY TO SIR FRANK LASCELLES, IN BERLIN

Unsigned and undated copy, handed by the British Ambassador to Baron Marschall on November 30th, 1896.

Telegram.

Please remind the Emperor that England stands in as great danger as Germany in respect to Socialist disturbances; and that neither Her Majesty's Government nor the capitalists of this country have the slightest sympathy with the agitation. We should be deserted immediately by our political supporters, were they to suspect us of countenancing the strikers and trades-unions.

The imputation is so devoid of foundation that an official denial would be received with ridicule.

The Home Secretary has been communicated with, in accordance with the desire of the German Government.

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM, AT HANOVER, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *December 2nd*, 1896

Cipher telegram.

I spoke to the British Ambassador, as arranged for by Your Highness. I informed him that Your Highness had submitted Lord Salisbury's telegram of refusal to me, and that you were as amazed at its tone as I was. After all that I had done for England, a short article in the newspapers to calm the Press here, would have been the least that I might expect from Lord Salisbury; meanwhile valuable time had been lost. Those papers which are under the influence of Prince Bismarck would not let go this opportunity of egging on public feeling, which was already excited against England for well-known reasons, to launch a violent attack against her. And the dangerous suggestion that England, too timid to provoke open war with her cousin, was ready to transfer the war to the domain of business by assisting revolutions and strikes in Germany with her money-bags, was still uncontradicted from the English side, and was assuming yet larger proportions amongst the German people. The situation might be so much strained by this train of events, that with the best will in the world, I should be unable to give ear to the British Government's wishes in the midst of the complications which might be expected. For I was not in a position to act contrary to the interests and wishes of the whole German people. The Ambassador was very greatly perplexed. After an attempt to gloss it over a little, he at last frankly admitted the correctness of my description and said that he would telegraph again and try by all means to prevent a fresh Press campaign between the two countries. He ended by saying that it would be better for Lord Salisbury to be laughed at in England, if he put some obvious commonplace in the newspapers, than that the omission to do so should bring heavy troubles upon his head.

I also visited Herr von Szögyény and found him generally

calmer and very grateful for my good treatment of England. I told him how England had lately replied to my good treatment. His hair stood on end, and he was furious. I said to him that it would be a good thing if it was frankly explained to England from Vienna that such behaviour towards Germany was bound to meet with the strongest disapproval there. He promised to get this done at once.

XIII. 10

THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, TO THE EMPEROR WILLIAM, *December 8th*, 1896

I hasten to submit to Your Majesty a copy of a telegram sent by Lord Salisbury on December 3rd to Sir Frank Lascelles, and communicated by him to me.

The telegram is apparently connected with the one regarding the strike at Hamburg which Your Majesty graciously despatched to me from Hanover. It evidently contains Lord Salisbury's reply to the steps taken by Sir Frank Lascelles under the impression of the serious representations made to him by Your Majesty.

Meanwhile, an article in the *Times* of December 5th turns to ridicule, as an invention from Friedrichsruh, the assertion in certain German papers that British business people are responsible for the disturbances at Hamburg; it describes the assertion as being completely devoid of proof. The fact that this article was announced by telegram through Reuter strengthens my impression that Lord Salisbury considers that he has carried out the promise contained in his telegram to Sir Frank Lascelles [see below] and that nothing more on the subject is to be expected from London. (The EMPEROR: '*I have done all that I can.*')

Enclosure

LORD SALISBURY TO SIR FRANK LASCELLES, *December 3rd*, 1896

Unsigned copy communicated by the British Ambassador to Prince von Hohenlohe.

Copy.

Since the Emperor seems to attach great weight to our influencing the attitude of the Press on this point, I will communicate with Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, who is on the staff of the *Times*, and with whom I have a slight personal acquaintance. But please impress on His Majesty that we are absolutely without the means of influencing or controlling the Press, and I cannot be sure as to the effect which may be produced by my appeal to Wallace. The only course for the *Times* to take in dealing with the matter would be to censure Prince Bismarck. Could this be considered objectionable?

XIII. 16

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *April 22nd*, 1897

Very confidential.

The numerous rumours which have appeared in the British Press for some time, hinting at more energetic action by England in South Africa, both against the Transvaal Republic and with regard to Delagoa Bay, deserve, in my opinion, our full attention, and the time has perhaps already come, for us to make up our minds as to our eventual attitude in this question. The present moment is especially appropriate, because there seems to be a momentary pause here, which allows us to give ripe consideration to our interests particularly in South Africa, as well as with reference to our relations with England, which bear greatly on our attitude in great European questions.

I am aware that there is a party in Germany which is hostile to all British action in South Africa and would like to make the Imperial Government responsible if it was willing to look calmly on at any forcible constraint of the Transvaal or a seizure of Portuguese territory, whatever might be the alleged reason for the latter. This party, whose patriotic motives deserve every consideration, fail, in my opinion, to distinguish between two questions of very different import—that of maintaining the Transvaal as an independent state and that of a British seizure of Portuguese territory. It does not, moreover, define for itself what means would be at the Imperial Government's disposal for opposing successfully one or other of these possibilities, without endangering higher interests of German policy. However little I may allow myself an opinion on military questions, yet two things seem to me to admit of little doubt: first, that without a strong fleet, which unfortunately we still lack, it would not be materially possible for us to give the Transvaal Republic decisive assistance, if ever it were attacked by the British; secondly, that actual intervention by us must lead to a conflict between England and Germany, which, as far as I can judge, would scarcely be limited to South Africa. In other words, it would probably be impossible to localise an Anglo-German conflict, arising out of Germany's having given military support to the Transvaal, and we should be driven into a war with England, which might assume larger dimensions than our colonial party, which only considers its own special objects, is willing to realise. Where and how would such a war be fought out, and where could we come to grips with England in a military sense, without a strong fleet at our disposal, or without being sure of at least one ally whose fleet would be able and ready to supply our lack of sufficient sea-forces?

Although I am unwilling to anticipate in any way Your Highness' more valuable opinion on this point, I think I may now express the fear that, so far as I can estimate the position of affairs in Europe and the mutual relations of the Powers, we should have little hope of finding such an ally just at present. Austria would not be able to help us, and our experiences of Italy so far lead to the conclusion that she would not set herself against England, on whose future assistance in the Mediterranean she is relying. It is not going too far to assume that we could hope for benevolent neutrality from Russia at most. Finally as regards France, her own interests ought to prompt her to join with us in opposing England's colonial expansion with all her might. I do not wish to anticipate the expert judgment of the Imperial Ambassador in Paris, but I cannot help feeling serious anxiety lest the French Government, far from being ready to join with us, would always regard a complication between Germany and England as a welcome invitation to take advantage of circumstances, and with the help of an England, hostile to us, and perhaps also in the hope of Russia's friendship, to challenge the Peace of Frankfort.

Even if, however, these fears prove unfounded and what happens is that none of the other Powers intervene against us in the conflict, there still remains the fact that there is no theatre of war on which the German army could grip the British, and we should be reduced to injuring them later in other ways, by siding with and supporting their opponents everywhere where they have interests—in Egypt, China and elsewhere.

Whether England would not be able, if it came to a conflict, to inflict great losses upon us with her fleet by bombarding our principal coast towns is a question which I do not venture to decide. That there would certainly be no lack of readiness to do so I firmly believe. Here South Africa is looked on as something special, not only for material reasons and because Mr. Rhodes and other large capitalists wish to have the first call there, but to a great extent because British *amour propre* has received painful blows there and burns to make up for them by forcing the Boers to bow their necks under the yoke. If it is perhaps not true, as is asserted in many quarters, that Mr. Chamberlain sees entirely eye to eye with Mr. Rhodes, it cannot be denied that the Minister's speeches and his whole attitude have aroused afresh and given life to the hopes of those who refuse to relinquish revenge for Dr. Jameson's unsuccessful expedition. Added to this, public opinion here still holds Germany responsible for President Kruger's present unwillingness to fall in with England's requirements. Irritation against Germany is for this reason generally prevalent here and is shown even to-day on every occasion, and particularly in the

Press, whenever this question is discussed. But I still think it doubtful whether the British Cabinet has decided on violent treatment of the Transvaal question for a long time to come. My impression, although I naturally cannot prove it, is that Lord Salisbury, for whom Mr. Chamberlain has become a little too strong, will make an effort to check him and to obtain a peaceful solution by negotiation with President Kruger. Even if this unproved assumption is correct, I must not leave it unsaid that as things here are now, events may happen to influence Lord Salisbury's opinions in the opposite sense. If Lord Salisbury finds that the great majority of his colleagues are agreed that the Republic's attitude of refusal can no longer be borne, he may possibly follow this impulse against his better knowledge, especially if it can be proved that public opinion here is speaking out decidedly for it. My earlier reports have made known to Your Highness the fears constantly felt here that Mr. Rhodes and his friends may come to contemplate a South African Republic,[1] and I may therefore only indicate here that, even if this fear is not of decisive importance, it plays a certain part in the decisions of the British Cabinet in respect of the Transvaal.

The possibility of a seizure of Portuguese territory in South Africa is quite a different matter. So long as there is no positive break between Germany and England, I do not think that Lord Salisbury would decide on so serious a provocation to us as the occupation of Delagoa Bay would clearly be. And it is not in accordance with Lord Salisbury's traditions and political methods to lay hands without notice on the remaining portion of the Portuguese colony; he would probably first ascertain whether serious objections were to be expected from other quarters, and from Germany in particular. There would still always be time for us to return to the former idea of a partition of this country, supposing Portugal will give it up, or if England herself proceeds to occupy the parts which adjoin our own present territory and are indispensable to us in the event of England's taking possession of the Southern portion. This prospect of entering into peaceable possession of a suitable portion of the Mozambique territory would naturally fall to the ground, if a break occurred beforehand between ourselves and England on account of the Transvaal Republic. This would be the best moment for the British Cabinet, if it cherishes any intentions at all against Portugal, to seize the whole of the Portuguese colony without offering us any indemnity whatever. It is beyond me to judge how, if at all, we can stop this or change it in future, once it has become a *fait accompli*.

If the foregoing suggestions, to which I am drawing Your

[1] Cf. p. 381.

Highness' attention, have any foundation, it may not appear unjustified to ask if it might not be worth an effort to ascertain, before the crisis in South Africa becomes acute, whether an understanding with England is not possible, whereby at least we may obtain suitable compensation for what cannot be saved. Even the Transvaal Government could not reproach us for coming to an understanding, if England joins to it an assurance that she has no intention of interfering with the internal independence of the Republic, and that she merely demands the maintenance and performance of the Convention existing between the two countries. There would scarcely be much objection here against most-favoured-nation treatment being granted to Germany. It might be possible to use this opportunity for settling other colonial differences as well. England could render us a further service on this occasion, by favouring our wishes in China, instead of exercising her influence against them. If, as I hope I may assume, Russia raises no difficulties against it, it would, if we could obtain England's consent as well, no longer seem hopeless to induce China to cede Amoy to us, with its hinterland—a success which might perhaps weigh more effectively for the development of our trade, and also for our fleet, than many of those acquisitions in Africa on which the colonial party sets such store.

I need hardly mention here that it is months since the Transvaal question has been discussed between Lord Salisbury and myself, and that I do not consider it my business to sound the Minister as to his views on this question without definite instructions from Your Highness ; so that I am not in a position to guarantee that he will eventually consent to an understanding with us, and what compensation he will grant us, supposing we, on our side, raise no objection against the questions outstanding between England and the Republic being settled by direct negotiation between the two parties. If Your Highness, with His Majesty's approval, is willing to entrust me with such an enquiry, I must say at once that so difficult and delicate a task cannot be hurried, and that I must ask permission to choose the right moment, as I can best judge. As Your Highness knows, the Prime Minister does not return until the 29th, and it must undoubtedly be some days before I can introduce the subject of the Transvaal at all in a natural manner, without betraying that I am instructed to do so. Even then it will require the greatest care to make certain that if the Prime Minister does not consider a direct understanding desirable, he may not regard my words as a rapprochement intended by the Imperial Government and make use of them in this sense in Paris or St. Petersburg, although my experiences hitherto do not make this last seem probable.

If, during my conversations with the Prime Minister, it should

become evident that under certain conditions he is inclined for a direct understanding with us on the Transvaal question, it is my humble opinion that we might regard it as a satisfactory result. We should not only escape the possibility of being forced into a dispute which can bring us no advantage, but Germany's position in Europe would, if I am not mistaken, become much freer and more influential, if it was universally known that the strained relations between England and Germany, on which various parties are speculating, had again become normal, and that we were in a position to be on good terms with England and Russia at the same moment.

(The EMPEROR: '*Perfectly correct. I agree.*')

German Note.

According to a Wolff telegram, six British war vessels had run into Delagoa Bay and four of them had sailed up the river as far as the Transvaal frontier.

XIII. 23

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *May 12th*, 1897

Very confidential.

Recently, in two long conversations with Lord Salisbury, I was able to discuss the present relations between Germany and England, and quietly draw from the Prime Minister statements from which I could form an idea of his attitude towards these questions, and how far, if at all, he was prepared to help in improving these relations.

For years it has been my habit, well known therefore to Lord Salisbury, of putting before him the opinions of the *Standard*, a Conservative organ, as though they were inspired by him, and he has always disclaimed them, partly annoyed and partly joking, and has hardly once admitted that he ever read an article in this paper.

In our entirely confidential and academic conversation this time, I mentioned a leading article in the *Standard* of May 7th, which represented that the earlier intimacy between Germany and England had unfortunately fallen off, but that Lord Salisbury's skill had successfully made good this loss by improved relations towards Russia and France. I added that these were not the only unfriendly expressions I had met with in the Press here, which seemed to make a point of making us responsible for everything that happened in the world not in accordance with British desires. . . . The Press made it its business also at every opportunity to proclaim and spread the suspicion that we were secretly working everywhere against British desires and interests. We were being continually reproached with having alone pre-

vented the success of British policy, working for the restoration of peace between Greece and Turkey [1]; moreover, any Englishman who reads the papers could not escape the impression that President Kruger would long since have acceded to the British warnings, if we had not encouraged him to resist, supplied him with arms and munitions, and promised him our support in case of attack. There was not the shadow of a proof for these assertions, and yet they were universally believed and were successful, seeing that they frustrated every effort to remove mutual irritation. I would not deny that in Germany also there was suspicion and anger, as shown by expressions in the German Press, but I would not admit that these were unjustified or inexplicable. I myself felt no personal grudge against the British Cabinet as such, as I trusted his oft-repeated declaration that he, Lord Salisbury, wished for an alteration of the *status quo* in South Africa as little as we did. But I must admit that I could not extend the confidence I felt in him to Mr. Chamberlain, who was evidently full of ambition to play a leading part in England's colonial policy, and whose whole attitude and behaviour had given rise to suspicion even in England. I had frequently explained to him the interest we possessed in the Transvaal, and had all the less inducement to refer to the subject again, since I had heard nothing about the Transvaal from Berlin for months, so that, as he might imagine, it was not in the least my duty to discuss the question with him. Also, he would know from old experience that even under Prince Bismarck I had preserved some independence of thought and under certain circumstances had not feared to assume responsibility for my own opinion. More than once in former days I had reminded him (Salisbury) that we also had a rather obstinate colonial party to which, for parliamentary and other reasons, we had to pay the same attention as the British Cabinet felt necessary when dealing with the British jingos. This was why I could not deny that the possibility of the use of force against the Transvaal, as perhaps contemplated by Mr. Chamberlain, filled me with some anxiety, as I could not doubt that our colonial jingos would use it to besiege the Imperial Government with reproaches and demands. He, Lord Salisbury, well knew how indefatigable had been my efforts for ten years to establish such an intimate and confidential relationship between the two nations as I considered best for their mutual interests. I thought that he himself should admit that England then did not fare really so badly in her transactions with us, and I reminded him of the treaty by which England received Zanzibar, the key of East Africa, in return for a rock in the sea which was worthless to her [Heligoland]. . . .

The Prime Minister, who entered into our academic discussion

[1] Cf. p. 459.

with evident willingness, tried especially to combat the suspicion that England was contemplating the use of force against the Transvaal. He said that it was not at all the case, and he could assure me that even Mr. Chamberlain was not thinking of such a solution. The first object of the military preparations I had mentioned was only to bring home to the Boers at Pretoria that England was armed against all eventualities. He must also certainly add that he did not ascribe to President Kruger any intention of an aggressive policy, but that he could not place the same confidence in the Raad, whose members might, according to his information, easily be led to pass rash resolutions.

Lord Salisbury passed on, but certainly with very marked reserve, to the presence of the British squadron at Delagoa Bay, and tried to convince me that England contemplated no special advantage there, that she was not thinking of acquiring that Portuguese colony, either wholly or in part, and all the less, since Portugal was certainly not thinking of giving up Mozambique. I replied with a smile that I knew this, but the Portuguese Government had to contend with very bad finances, and wealthy England could easily find means for temporary possession and temporary control of the colony. This the Minister did not deny with the same firmness with which he denied aggressive intentions against the Transvaal. My impression was that he could not conquer a certain embarrassment. On this occasion he did not deny that he had once before proposed to me to divide the Portuguese colony with us in the event of its being given up by Portugal. Finally he informed me with a smile that one of his ancestors had leased some family property in London for 999 years, which would not expire for another 700 years.

Later in our conversation the Minister remarked that it was a bad habit of his countrymen always to require a scapegoat. Formerly this had been Russia, and now it was Germany; he, however, wished sincerely for the restoration of good relations and thoroughly agreed with me as to the high desirability of removing the irritation that had arisen.

The above is a *résumé* of my first conversation with Lord Salisbury, and I have merely to add that my impression, when I left him, was that he would not be disinclined to enter into an understanding which would give him a free hand in South Africa, if too high a price were not demanded of him. . . .

When I met the Minister again recently, the picture had so far changed, that the Minister, although he repeated his wish for better relations, carefully avoided the subject of compensation. In the course of conversation, however, he remarked concerning the Transvaal, that no sacrifice need be made in order to obtain what one had already, or could have the moment one desired it.

Although this, well as I know him, does not exclude the possibility of his still making some concessions in the end, if he could ascertain the extent of our demands, I do not think that I may, without special instructions from Your Highness, name conditions of the acceptability of which I am far from being convinced.

I must mention, on the other hand, that on one point, which came by chance into the conversation, Lord Salisbury did show a momentary readiness to meet our wishes. British policy in the Far East was mentioned, and I had said that I still thought it to have been a great mistake that the British Government refused at the time to join with us in the mediation between Japan and China. Lord Salisbury replied that this had been a mistake of his predecessor, and I informed him that Lord Kimberley had then not concealed from me his wish to acquire a piece of the Chinese coast, and that his refusal to join in the mediation had spoilt her chances. I added: 'If Lord Kimberley had not committed this mistake, you would to-day probably be in possession of the piece you wished for, and we should very likely have obtained an equivalent.' Lord Salisbury answered with some vehemence that he would not be jealous of such an acquisition on our part. But when, on this, I wanted to discuss the point further and get him to be more explicit, he sheered off it and spoke of the compensation which he would require in return. I confined myself to replying that, in my opinion, in such a case he could demand no compensation from us, if at the same time he induced the Chinese to cede a suitable portion of land to him. Lord Salisbury admitted this, but lost himself in reflections to the effect that there was no hurry, as the Russian railway through China would not be finished for a long time.

Although this may not imply a definite rejection, it is not my impression that Lord Salisbury would come in with our wishes in China straight away. I beg Your Highness to decide whether I am to return to this point at a suitable opportunity. (The EMPEROR: '*Yes. The result is what I predicted; we get nothing voluntarily which we do not take for ourselves with armed fist.*')

CHAPTER XXXI

THE UNITED STATES, HAWAII AND SAMOA. JULY–DECEMBER, 1897

[In 1876 the United States concluded a treaty of commercial reciprocity with the King of Hawaii. There followed a period of great prosperity for the Hawaiian Islands, accompanied by efforts on the part of the Sovereign to maintain autocratic government in spite of the constitution which had been granted. The disorders which followed caused the United States to negotiate a treaty of annexation early in 1893. In July, 1894, Hawaii was declared a republic. The persistent plots of the royalists, however, caused President MacKinley to conclude a second annexation treaty on June 16th, 1897.]

XIII. 28

THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, AT ALT-AUSSEE, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, *July 18th*, 1897

The conclusion of the American-Hawaiian Treaty of annexation (June 16th) has, as is known in England, much agitated German public opinion and caused a general desire that Germany should now obtain a final settlement of the unsatisfactory conditions in Samoa. The Imperial Government cannot ignore the wishes that have been brought directly to its notice.

I beg Your Excellency, therefore, to sound Lord Salisbury at the next opportunity as to whether the British Government would be ready to join with us in approaching that of the United States on the subject of the intended unconditional annexation of Hawaii. In certain events, it might be necessary to propose in Washington that, either by altering her declared policy of neutralising, as far as possible, those Pacific islands which were still independent, America should withdraw from the Condominium in Samoa, or, by admitting the equal importance of German and British interests in Hawaii, with those of America in Samoa, she should agree to a neutralisation of Hawaii, similar to that of Samoa.

In the first case, it might be agreed between England and Germany in Samoa either to postpone the question or, if circumstances permitted, to raise it again now in the manner in which,

according to your reports of January 16th and 23rd, 1889,[1] Lord Salisbury himself proposed that Samoa should fall to Germany, Tonga to England and Hawaii to America. I also beg Your Excellency to refer again to our own earlier proposal (1893 and 1894) to hand over the Manua group to England, if you consider it suitable.

It is observed here that in contradistinction to the American-Hawaiian annexation Treaty of 1893, Article III of the Agreement now before us declares Hawaii's existing treaties with foreign states nul and void. This decision cuts as much into German as into British treaty relationships with Hawaii.

I enclose a copy of the passage in question in the new annexation Treaty,[2] and beg Your Excellency to draw attention in your negotiations to the apparent discrepancy between the present Agreement and the rules of International Law, and to obtain a statement from the British Government as to its views on this point.

The manner of introducing the point of view indicated above into discussion I leave to your discretion. I hope to receive an early report from you.

XIII. 29

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *July 22nd*, 1897

Cipher.

In confidential conversation I questioned Lord Salisbury as to how he regarded the annexation of Hawaii and whether he proposed to take steps of any kind in Washington. I indicated that our public opinion was taking a serious note of the move by which German interests would be affected.

The Prime Minister replied willingly that he could not undertake anything alone, but would be quite ready to go into the question with another Power—ourselves, for instance. His opinion was that it would be well to delay taking action in Washington a little longer, because the mere fact of England's moving in any way against annexation would, owing to the feeling in America, be enough to decide the Senate in favour of the annexation Bill. But he also considered it necessary, before taking further steps, to settle the somewhat doubtful question as to whether, when a country was annexed by a foreign Power, the treaties with other Powers in force up to that moment could be declared nul and void or not. Lord Salisbury referred to Madagascar where the French had simply thrust aside the existing treaties with other Powers, and expressed a strong wish to know our feeling on this question of International Law.

Later in the conversation I showed that America's continu-

[1] Cf. Vol. I, pp. 244, 273. [2] Not given.

ance in Samoa was incompatible with the policy she was now pursuing with regard to Hawaii, and I reminded him that the Americans had been planning for a considerable time to withdraw from Samoa. The Prime Minister did not discuss this further, but complained of the increasing worthlessness of Samoa, where business enterprises of Europeans were going from bad to worse. He insinuated that although the British now possessed the largest amount of land there, it was certainly not worth very much. When I replied in joke that he would perhaps be glad to let us have Samoa assuming that it was so worthless, he did not contradict me with much decision; but he avoided going further into the question.

I did not think it advisable to do any more on this occasion or to formulate definite proposals regarding Samoa, which, if they were rejected, would perhaps stand in the way of further discussion and agreement on a joint attitude regarding Hawaii. Once Lord Salisbury has engaged himself in this direction, it may perhaps be easier to convince him that we have a right to some profit in return for our support in this question. If I receive no different instructions from Your Highness, I shall return to the question at the next favourable opportunity. Meanwhile, I think I must call attention to the fact that Lord Salisbury has repeatedly and expressly withdrawn from his proposals, described in my reports of January 16th and 23rd, 1889; for he indicated that he could not act against the increasingly bitter opposition of Australia against giving up Samoa to Germany, and must therefore let this idea drop. I find no symptom that Lord Salisbury has altered in this respect, and must assume for the present that the proposal to let us have Samoa would meet with serious opposition from him. I think it more probable that he would agree to a neutralisation of Hawaii, similar to that of Samoa, if this could be obtained in Washington.

German Note.

On July 30th, 1897, England denounced the Anglo-German commercial Treaty of May 30th, 1865. That this action was not to be regarded as a hostile measure as a matter of course, was proved by the British Government's simultaneous proposal to conclude a fresh most-favoured-nation treaty, intended to regulate relations solely between England and Germany to the exclusion of the colonies. It is comprehensible, however, that the bare denouncement should have made much bad blood in Germany and even roused the Emperor William.

XIII. 32

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 31st*, 1897

Cipher telegram.

The Prime Minister now empowers me to state that he would agree that the German and British representatives in Washington

should receive instructions to indicate there that it would be desirable for the American Government to agree to a neutralisation of Hawaii, similar to that of Samoa, or else withdraw from the Condominium in Samoa.

Later in our very confidential conversation to-day I was again able to suggest, as from myself personally, the notion of ceding Samoa to Germany in the event of America's withdrawing from the Condominium. Lord Salisbury at first objected that the colonial party here would strongly disfavour such a renunciation; he then tried to find out from me whether we would perhaps compensate England by renouncing our share of New Guinea. I explained that this would have the same effect on our colonial party as the cession of Zanzibar in return for Heligoland had had. Lord Salisbury dropped this idea and enquired what privileges, if any, we should eventually grant to British trade and shipping in Samoa. I did not go further into this question, but I begged the Minister to indicate his wishes more in detail and said emphatically that if an understanding was arrived at, England might perhaps have Tonga and the Manua group, whilst America would then keep Hawaii.

Finally Lord Salisbury, who to-day showed a strong wish for a better understanding with Germany, said that before deciding finally, he would have to have a further report, and would answer me very shortly.

The Minister goes very soon to Osborne, and I shall not be able to speak to him until the end of next week.

XIII. 33

COUNT MONTS, PRUSSIAN MINISTER AT MUNICH, TO THE PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *July* 31*st*, 1897

When yesterday's denunciation of the Anglo-German commercial Treaty became known, the two leading Munich papers at once commented on it.

The *Allgemeine Zeitung* expressed the view that the denunciation is the prelude to a close trade relationship of England with her colonies. This, however, is said to be directed more against North America (The EMPEROR: '*Nonsense! it is against Germany.*') than against the continental European states. Germany may be able, during the last year of the Treaty, to conclude a new and acceptable treaty with England. If this is not attained, the question still is (The EMPEROR: '*The question answers itself.*') who will get the worst of a tariff war. But in any case, it is all the more an urgent duty for the continental states to seek a basis on which, with or without or even against England, they may be able to withstand the aggressive commercial policy of the New World. (The EMPEROR: '*Yes.*')

Similarly, the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* says that the denunciation is the beginning of a revolution in the whole system of British commercial policy. (The EMPEROR: '*Yes.*') It very confidently points out that there is no greater compliment for German industry than for England to try and close her doors to it. (The EMPEROR: '*She will not be content with the compliment or with closing the doors.*') The British in this way would not escape from their tremendous struggle for trade any more successfully than other highly protected countries—France and America—have been able to do. A definite change-over by England to Protection indicates that that Empire is losing its pre-eminence in the markets of the world.

(The EMPEROR: '*Now that the superiority of German industry is recognised, Albion will soon make efforts to destroy it, and she will undoubtedly be successful, unless we quickly and energetically forestall the evil by building a strong fleet. The last sentence is sheer nonsense, for England herself will not take up Protection, but her colonies will. Since these are all over the world, England has ample trade circulation and exchange with them, whilst Germany is excluded from them! Caeterum censeo naves aedificandas.*')

XIII. 34

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM, AT KIEL, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, AT AUSSEE, *August* 1st, 1897

Telegram en clair.

From the depths of my heart I deplore the sudden denunciation of the Commercial Treaty. It means a heavy blow to our poor, storm-tossed nation. This indescribable act is equivalent to the commencement of war to the knife against [the trade] of our State which is only now blossoming out into productiveness. The people will now perceive how much valuable time in the last ten years has been wasted, in spite of my warnings—[if] all shipbuilding had not been violently opposed for years by the Socialist party and allowed to come to nothing through incomprehensible infatuation, we should not now be practically weaponless on the sea and utterly a prey to those who attack our trade. If we had had a strong, watchful fleet, there would have been no denunciation; our answer must be a large and speedy increase in the building of new ships.

German Note.

The reproduction of the above telegram is faulty and destructive to the sense, but the Emperor's essential meaning is clear.

XIII. 35

THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, IN BERLIN, TO THE EMPEROR WILLIAM, AT KIEL, *August 3rd*, 1897

Telegram.

I offer humble thanks for Your Majesty's telegram of August 1st. I received it on my journey and delayed answering it until I could learn here to what the denunciation amounted and the circumstances accompanying it.

The expectation to which we clung till the last, that England would not allow herself to be driven to this step by her colonies, has unfortunately not been realised. Seeing, however, that, simultaneously with the denunciation, the British Government has made proposals for concluding a new treaty, we may well hope that as the interests of both parties almost balance each other, this denunciation does not mean the start of a tariff war, but that we shall reach a satisfactory understanding with the mother-country, at least.—Our future relations with the colonies will partly depend on their governments. With the Cape and Australia there is hope of a favourable outcome for our trade relations. I have always shared Your Majesty's opinion that an effort should be made to increase the fleet with all our strength for the protection of German trade, and that under certain circumstances this can be effected.

German Note.

On August 6th, 1897, Hatzfeldt held a conversation with Sir Thomas Sanderson (Under-Secretary of State) on the Samoa question, according to which Lord Salisbury had been reminded, by the appropriate department in the Foreign Office, of an agreement already existing with France, which appeared to stand in the way of an Anglo-German understanding about Hawaii. Hatzfeldt's impression from this conversation was that certain parties in the Foreign Office were anxious to deter Lord Salisbury from undertaking joint action with Germany in Washington.

XIII. 36

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *August 11th*, 1897

Sir Thomas Sanderson told me that after our conversation of the 6th about Hawaii, he had reported to Lord Salisbury at Hatfield in detail and, in particular, my words on the subject. In his reply, the Prime Minister did not go into further details, but merely instructed Sir Thomas to hand me a copy of the Anglo-French Agreement about Hawaii.[1]

From this document it appeared that the Agreement dated

[1] An agreement between England, France and the United States, guaranteeing the independence of these islands.

from 1843, and Sir Thomas remarked that only a short time ago no one in the Foreign Office had been aware of its existence. About a year previously, the French, being disturbed by an entirely unfounded report that England was thinking of annexing Hawaii, appealed to the text of the Agreement in question, in support of their view that England had no right to occupy the Sandwich Islands, whether entirely or in part.

From my knowledge of the Minister, it must be concluded from the fact that Lord Salisbury was content to hand me the text of the Anglo-French Agreement without further commentary, that, under the circumstances, he thinks it out of the question to take the joint step in Washington, which I proposed; for if the Americans contemplated a neutralisation of Hawaii, similar to that of Samoa, the aforesaid step might lead to England's violating the engagement into which she entered at that time with France, supposing she consented to a triple occupation of Hawaii. I must for the present leave it an open question whether the fear of being involved in a fresh dispute with France has played the decisive part. But I think it undoubted that on the day of our last conversation Lord Salisbury was ignorant of that old agreement with the French, or had forgotten its existence at any rate, and he would honestly have liked to exercise influence jointly with us in Washington in the way we proposed, partly in order to do something unpleasant to the Americans in consonance with his present mood, but partly also because an undertaking shared with us might become the point of departure for a fresh rapprochement between England and Germany.

As things are now, I think that if Your Highness does not definitely decide otherwise, we should avoid any further initiative in the affair, which would in any case probably lead to nothing. I may add that this appears to me all the more advisable, seeing that the Prime Minister seems to be going to make a long stay in the country and did not even come up for his customary reception to-day. It is assumed in the Foreign Office that the Minister does not mean to come to London at all for the present, so that it appears doubtful to me whether I shall have an opportunity of speaking to him before my leave begins, unless I insist upon a meeting with him, and this, considering everything, I do not think advisable. Unless therefore Your Highness instructs me otherwise, I shall take no step in this direction.

Sir Thomas Sanderson, Under-Secretary of State, went also on leave yesterday for four weeks, and his substitute, Mr. Bertie, is scarcely well enough informed to transact other than current business.

I enclose for Your Highness the copy of the Agreement concluded on November 28th, 1843, between England and France

respecting the Sandwich Islands, which Sir Thomas Sanderson sent to me.

XIII. 37

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, *August 21st*, 1897

Extract.

. . . England's engagements with regard to the Anglo-French Agreement of November 28th, 1843, concerning Hawaii will not be violated by either of the two proposals [1] which you communicated to Lord Salisbury in the memorandum attached to report No. 331 of July 31st. . . .

In case Lord Salisbury should again consider the idea of joining us in negotiating with the United States regarding their withdrawal from Samoa, the following concessions in the South Seas can be made to him at once, in view of a discussion and agreement which will take place later. On the assumption that Samoa falls to Germany, we should concede to England Tonga, Savage Island (Nuié) and the Manua group, which really counts as part of Samoa. Also, the Australia-America mail steamers would be freed from harbour dues and pilotage fees in Samoa. Finally the Anglo-German declaration [2] regarding freedom of trade and communications in the German and British possessions in the Western Pacific (April 10th, 1886) would be extended to Samoa and the islands mentioned above, which would fall to England's share. The suggested relief for British mail steamers and her maritime and trade communications would at once be granted for a period of, say, ten to fifteen years.

XIII. 42

BARON VON ROTENHAN, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, *November 6th*, 1897

A report by the Imperial Chargé d'Affaires in Washington, of which I enclose a copy (not given), indicates that there are increasing signs now that the American Senate will accept the treaty for the annexation of Hawaii, so that it appears even more important to conclude an Anglo-German agreement, to provide for taking the joint step that should immediately follow that event.

Your last report indicates that Lord Salisbury has of late shown less inclination for such a step. Being convinced, however, that an understanding between ourselves and England provides the best, if not the only, basis for suitable measures against

[1] Cf. pp. 483–4.

[2] See Riebow, *Kolonialgesetzgebung*, p. 86; also Vol. I, Ch. XV.

a disturbance of the balance in the South Seas, which would be the result of unconditional annexation of Hawaii by the United States, I beg you, so far as circumstances permit and you may consider it opportune, not to miss any opportunity of approaching the Prime Minister again on this matter, which is perpetually occupying public opinion in Germany. In order to take account of Lord Salisbury's objections to giving up Samoa to us, and the respect for Australian wishes and feelings which he considers binding on himself, I would beg you to indicate, perhaps more emphatically than before, that we should not press for an immediate understanding between England and Germany regarding Samoa, but should be ready, if necessary, to discuss also the question of a temporary conversion of the present triple control into a dual one, shared between ourselves and England.

I shall look with especial interest for your further communications on the subject.

XIII. 43

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *November 20th*, 1897

Cipher telegram. Secret.

Lord Salisbury, whom I have just seen, showed decidedly more readiness and spoke more frankly than at our last meeting.[1] He began by saying that he had consulted Mr. Chamberlain about the neutral zone in the Togo hinterland, and that the latter had declared his willingness to withdraw all the British posts in that district if we would do the same, but that he thought it would be better for both sides to agree upon a fresh delimitation in accordance with the interests of each.

To this the Minister added that on the same occasion he had spoken to the Colonial Secretary about Samoa and had enquired whether he would give up Samoa to Germany in return for a suitable indemnity, say, Germany's share of New Guinea. Mr. Chamberlain had finally consented. I replied that, as I had remarked before,[2] *this* indemnity would be quite out of proportion and could not be granted by us, in consideration for our own public opinion. I was quite ignorant whether we were prepared to give up New Guinea at all, but certainly not for such an insignificant object as Samoa, unless we were offered suitable advantages *in addition*. I considered that we could do the following :— we could grant Tonga and other island groups to the British, also concessions for British trade and shipping in Samoa. Lord Salisbury remarked finally that we could discuss this matter again,

[1] Reported by Hatzfeldt on November 11th (not given).
[2] Cf. p. 485.

and that further bargaining would certainly produce a practical result; there was, however, plenty of time for this, since the Americans had not yet retired from Samoa. I replied that, in these circumstances, I foresaw no impediment in an eventual friendly understanding about the future of Samoa, which would be of undoubted benefit, as, when publicly known, it would pave the way for friendly relations between Germany and England and its effect in Europe would be to the advantage of *both* countries. Lord Salisbury did not contradict this, but he begged me not to underestimate the difficulties of his position. In this respect the situation was no longer the same as it was at the time of my first arrival in England and of his first Ministry. In England then there had been full confidence that he would defend British interests against foreign countries. Since then, however, the so-called 'jingos', whom he personally hated, had greatly increased in number and influence, and people positively distrusted him and represented him as being incompetent to defend British interests properly. He was obliged, therefore, to be doubly cautious.

On the whole, Lord Salisbury's words to-day again gave the impression that he desires an understanding with us, that he would like eventually to conclude an agreement with us about Samoa, and that a much better bargain could be made about New Guinea.

I have arranged with Lord Salisbury, who only returns to London next Wednesday, to send him prompt information by private letter.

XIII. 44

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *November 24th*, 1897

Cipher telegram.

I proposed to Lord Salisbury orally to-day the compensation for Samoa, indicated to me by Your Highness [1] (Tonga, etc., and trade privileges). He wishes first to speak to Mr. Chamberlain. He said that New Guinea was of little value, and that the only desire here was to find means to reassure public opinion in Australia, which alone was concerned in the matter.

COUNT HATZFELDT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *December 10th*, 1897

Cipher telegram.

Regarding the annexation of Hawaii, Lord Salisbury said that, according to news to-day from America, the requisite two-thirds majority in the Senate was clearly not forthcoming. The

[1] Cf. p. 490.

only question now was whether the American Government would try to carry out its intentions in another form, requiring only a simple majority. Any interference by England, and even Germany, who did not seem for the moment to enjoy much greater popularity in Washington, would merely hasten annexation.

From Lord Salisbury's general attitude to-day, I have no doubt that just now he is firmly determined to join in no démarche against annexation.

XIII. 45

COUNT HATZFELDT, IN LONDON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *December 18th*, 1897

Although my last conversation with the Prime Minister was purely academic in character and revealed nothing fresh as to his wishes and intentions, I think I may report certain words of his which appear to be not without some interest, in view of the situation here and the Prime Minister's feelings towards us.

Considering the personal intimacy between us, there could not, on this occasion also, fail to be confidential discussion of the present relations between England and Germany, and also of the chances of their improvement. Having avoided starting the subject, as this might have been taken for fresh pressure, I remarked that on none of the points which had been discussed hitherto had there been shown a friendliness which might have led to a rapprochement, and the Minister replied that unfortunately it was a fact that so far nothing had been done. The peculiar circumstances here were the cause of this; he had to take account of them, and he begged me 'not to lose patience'. (The EMPEROR: '*Quite right.*') If I paid attention to the unfriendly tone of the Press here, which he did not wish to excuse, I must have learned from it, that British public opinion was still little favourable to us, chiefly on account of Germany's commercial rivalry, which was very injurious to British trade. This would undoubtedly improve in time (The EMPEROR: '*I wonder!?*') if nothing happened here to excite still more the feeling prevailing just now. What he meant was that if the Cabinet now put on the stage what might be recognised outside as a rapprochement towards Germany, the opposite to what they were aiming at would be the result. The public would not understand such action and would blame the Government, and public discussion of it would only lead to renewed recrimination and an increase of the anti-German feeling. It would, therefore, be an obvious blunder in the minds of those who honestly wished for a rapprochement, if the British Cabinet were drawn into making an over-hasty attempt to win over public opinion in our favour. (The EMPEROR: '*That is not to be feared in a Cabinet which includes Chamberlain.*') More time was

required for this, and he hoped, therefore, that in judging the circumstances correctly I should not lose patience.

I replied to the Minister that as he might well imagine, I had carefully followed the manifestations in the British Press with regard to Germany. It seemed to me rather doubtful whether public feeling, as shown in the Press, would alter at some future time, unless the British Government did something to explain to the country the advantages it would derive from friendly relations with the German Empire. For myself I believed that we could the less afford to wait, seeing that we had to reckon with the fact that the British Cabinet was divided within itself, and that certain prominent members of it firmly opposed any policy friendly to Germany. (The EMPEROR: '*Yes.*') Lord Salisbury did not attempt to deny the truth of this assumption.

I think I should mention certain utterances of the Prime Minister, as they seem to indicate his views as to the future, and also the part England will be called upon to play. In the course of our conversation there came under discussion the view expressed by the Press here, that if England now held aloof from all complications, she would, in a European war, be called upon to strike the first blow. Lord Salisbury declared very frankly that he held this to be an illusion. However great England's sea-power might be, she would never be able to throw the deciding weight into the balance in a continental war, since she lacked an army to correspond. From this and other similar utterances of the Prime Minister's, I think I may conclude that at present he is not thinking of a substantial increase of the Navy, which he considers amply sufficient for defensive purposes in its present state. On the other hand, he has often said to me that he cannot altogether ignore the demand for an increase of the Army. So long as public opinion here fails to reconcile itself with the principle of universal service, there can be no thought of an army in the continental sense, which could be used outside England in the event of a European war, and they will have to be content if by offering greater inducements to those who wish to enter it, they can bring the Army up to a strength sufficient to supply the necessary reinforcements for England's continual little colonial wars in Asia as well as in Africa, whilst, at the same time, it remains strong enough to ensure the safety of the country in the event of attack from outside.

Finally I may remark that Lord Salisbury has expressed to my colleagues and myself his intention of missing his next reception day, Wednesday the 22nd, so that I shall probably find no opportunity of speaking to him before the holidays.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR. SEPTEMBER, 1897–APRIL, 1898

[The diplomatic correspondence given in the following chapter does not in any way touch upon the rights and wrongs of the revolutions in Cuba against the callous disregard of the Spaniards for the welfare of their colonies. It is mainly concerned with the suggestion of European naval co-operation against the United States, and afterwards of the Pope's arbitration.

The first revolution started in 1868 and continued for 10 years. The second organised rising dated from 1895 and was characterised by inability on the part of the Spanish troops sent out, either to defeat it, or to pacify the insurgents. Some thousands of Cubans qualified as United States citizens, in order to live in peace and liberty on the island at all, and this circumstance gave the United States an additional interest in the affairs of Cuba. The blowing up of the U.S. war-ship *Maine* in Havana Harbour on February 15th, 1898, was the final match which lit a conflagration, not extinguished until Spain had lost not only her West Indian possessions, but her East Indian ones as well.

In connection with this chapter, readers should study Dennis' *Adventures in American Diplomacy*, Chapter III; also the *Life of Lord Pauncefote, First Ambassador to the United States*, by R. B. Mowat, p. 215 et seq. The very biased account of the part played by Sir Julian Pauncefote given in these pages, cannot be altogether accepted as a strictly impartial representation of what occurred (cf. p. 510).]

German Note.

Ever since the beginning of 1895 there was a succession of rebellious movements in the Spanish island of Cuba.[1] Owing to the fact that they were assisted with money and arms, especially by North America, neither Marshal Martinez de Campos, who was sent to Cuba in April, 1895, nor his successor, General Weyler (January, 1896), were able to suppress them. At the end of February, 1896, the United States Senate passed a Resolution recognising the rebels as a belligerent Power and requesting President Cleveland to urge Spain to recognise Cuban independence. The resolution was adopted by the House of Representatives in April. For a considerable period President Cleveland and his successor, MacKinley, hesitated to carry out the wishes and Resolutions of Congress, which pressed for intervention in Cuba. Finally, however, public opinion in the States grew so heated against Spain, that General Woodford, the American Ambassador in Madrid, was instructed in September, 1897, to protest against the Spanish warfare in Cuba and to press for a speedy end of the

[1] For other circumstances, see p. 500.

war. This impelled the Emperor William, in his enthusiasm for the cause of monarchical solidarity, on September 28th, 1897, to recommend, by telegraph to the [Berlin] Foreign Office, intervention by the States of Europe, possibly by the continental States only, in favour of Spain. Bülow's telegram (below) shows that considerations in disfavour of action by Germany held the upper hand in the Foreign Office, to which the Emperor then gave way.

[The British Government was absolutely firm in refusing to consider the plan for a moment, and Mr. Chamberlain assured the American Ambassador, John Hay, that he would resign if any other attitude was adopted.]

XV. 3

BARON VON ROTENHAN, FOREIGN OFFICE, BERLIN, TO COUNT ZU EULENBURG, IN THE EMPEROR'S SUITE AT ROMINTEN, *September 29th*, 1897

Cipher telegram. Very secret.

Herr von Bülow telegraphs:

'I hope that I am expressing His Majesty's intention, if I make it my aim to prevent England and France from exploiting any German action in Spain's favour in order to embroil us with America, or from obtaining trade concessions from America at our expense. For this reason the action in question must be carefully considered, and at any rate, a binding pledge must be obtained from Russia for France's honest and complete co-operation. If England and France stand out of it, not only would the success of the action become dubious, but it might also place us at a considerable disadvantage, both politically and commercially. As regards the first, I would say that (as I read yesterday morning in the *Neue Freie Presse*, before I received the Emperor's telegram), upon information received from its Madrid Correspondent, the Brussels *Soir* expresses expectation that the German Emperor is about to address a note to the United States on Spain's behalf, which will be couched in the same tone as that of his telegram regarding the Transvaal conflict. On the commercial side, I would point out that England's exports to the United States are, according to the statistics that are before me, roughly 170, as against Germany's 94 and France's 66 millions of dollars. America's exports to England amount to 406, as against 97 to Germany and 47 millions to France; moreover, the new American tariff empowers the President of the United States to grant to foreign countries special customs privileges in return for mutual concessions. Russian, Austro-Hungarian and Italian trade and shipping interests stand far lower than those of England, Germany and France. BÜLOW.'

XV. 4

COUNT ZU EULENBURG, AT ROMINTEN, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *September 30th*, 1897

Telegram. Secret.

His Majesty, who has returned after a short absence, showed the text of his telegram concerning Spain and asked for my opinion. I agreed with him as regards monarchical principles, but expressed doubts as to England and France, saying that perhaps the right course for us would be a *secret* suggestion to Austria, she being the State from whom the actual suggestion would most naturally come.[1] Count Goluchovski had always tried to interest us in Spain, and would therefore, being sure of our agreement, undertake the suggestion in the Queen [of Spain's] interests.

His Majesty said that this course would gain his approval. It would meet the case. The most expedient form must be chosen. As regarded my doubts concerning France, i.e., the difficulty of winning a republic over for an action with a dynastic object, the continental Powers might be united on a basis of joint protection of the colonial possessions of the European Powers against overseas aggression.

XV. 5

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, AT SEMMERING, TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE, *September 30th*, 1897

Cipher telegram.

For the Ambassador, Count zu Eulenburg.

Both of your to-day's telegrams received. If we are to help the Spanish monarchy, without drawing on ourselves a serious setback politically and commercially, it is, in my opinion, important, first that England and France, or at any rate France (The EMPEROR: '*It seems that she is willing.*'), shall co-operate against America, and secondly, that *we* do not take the lead in this question. (The EMPEROR: '*Austria should do so.*') In Spain the French have far greater financial engagements than ourselves, whilst Germany possesses much greater business interests in America than France does. France has greater economic interests in Spain than we have, whereas a deterioration of relations with the United States would affect us more than France. Russia and Austria-Hungary, who have very small business and shipping interests in the United States, risk practically nothing, in regard to trade and shipping, in comparison with ourselves, France or England by taking action against America, whilst their naval forces are far behind those of the two countries last

[1] The Queen Regent of Spain was an Austrian Archduchess.

mentioned. This fact by itself would make it advisable that Russia and France (The EMPEROR: '*Best of all.*'), or France alone, or England alone (The EMPEROR: '*Hardly likely.*'), should take the initiative. But our point might perhaps be gained more speedily, if we, in accordance with the Emperor's commands, very confidentially suggest to the Vienna Cabinet, as being the nearest and most natural advocate for Her Spanish Majesty, that they should secure the agreement of England, France and Russia for joint action on Spain's behalf with the United States.

XV. 6

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN BERLIN, TO PRINCE VON LICHNOVSKY, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES IN VIENNA, *October 7th*, 1897

If the question of intervention about Cuba comes forward in Vienna, you will represent that success can only be expected, and the danger of greater complications avoided, if the action taken by Europe is general in character, and if, in particular, the British and French naval forces take up an unambiguous position in favour of intervention. Premature action by Germany would probably arouse jealousy both in London and Paris, and militate against participation by the naval Powers. Our gracious Master has therefore, really in Spain's interests, expressed his opinion that on political grounds Germany should not lead the western Powers in their position on the Cuban question, but he is prepared to consider seriously all proposals reaching us from London or Paris,—perhaps after suggestion by Austria.

PRINCE VON LICHNOVSKY, IN VIENNA, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *October 15th*, 1897

Cipher telegram.

On casual mention of the Cuban question, I ascertained that Count Goluchovski is not thinking of taking any action in favour of Spain, unless she expressly approaches the Cabinets.

German Note.

At the end of his report of February 10th, 1897, Radowitz, Ambassador in Madrid, remarked that the Spanish Government was observing with increasing uneasiness the persistent strengthening of the United States naval station in the Gulf of Mexico.

XV. 7

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN BERLIN, TO RADOWITZ, IN MADRID, *February 15th*, 1898

Señor Mendez Vigo [1] corroborates the indications in the two last sentences in your report of February 10th, and declares here

[1] Spanish Ambassador in Berlin.

that the movements of North American war-ships in Cuban waters and elsewhere are causing the Spanish Government serious anxiety regarding the intentions of the Washington Cabinet. The Ambassador enquired whether, in view of this, the German Government would not be prepared to lead European action in defence of the monarchical principle, against the republican aggressiveness of America.

I have submitted this Spanish enquiry to the Emperor, as well as Your Excellency's report. Our Gracious Master decides that we must always be ready to support the monarchical principle wherever it can be done with success, but that a suggestion in this sense *by Germany* would not be a suitable method. For the French Government, without whose co-operation action by Europe is hardly conceivable, would hardly be willing, and, in consideration of the state of French public opinion, would hardly be able to *follow the lead* of monarchical Germany in a great joint action against a sister republic. Initiative by us would merely give the United States the advantage that the question of material interests—always the one that counts in disputes between Europe and America—would be thrust into the background by all kinds of questions of feeling and sensitiveness, and Spain would be the sufferer. But if, on the other hand, the French Government, induced by material considerations, decided to carry the conflict of interests, which is known to exist now between her and the United States, into the field of the Cuban question, and if proposals were made from *Paris* to the other Cabinets for action by Europe—diplomatic, at first—His Majesty would be ready to co-operate. A suggestion of this kind from France would cease to exist as soon as the suspicion was aroused in France that it was in accordance with German wishes and would serve German ends. It will therefore be the Spanish Government's business, in her own interests, to observe proper discretion respecting the overtures you may make on the subject of this despatch, regarding Germany's eventual readiness. Both the friendship which the Spanish Government has shown to the French Government for more than thirteen years, and also France's important money interests in Spain, justify the assumption that the Paris Cabinet would not reject a Spanish appeal for help, unless specially difficult circumstances or—as in the case of German leadership—national feeling, stood in the way at the time.

German Note.

Writing on March 11th, 1898, Radowitz reported from Madrid that the Spanish Queen-Regent had approached the French Foreign Minister, Hanotaux, through Leon y Castillo, Spanish Ambassador in Paris, with the object of bringing about European intervention in the Cuban ques-

tion; Hanotaux, however, indicated the propriety of Austria taking the initiative, whilst expressing complete readiness to co-operate.

XV. 10

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN BERLIN, TO COUNT ZU EULENBURG, IN VIENNA, *March 15th*, 1898

Yesterday Herr von Szögyény handed me the enclosed copy of the verbal note,[1] which again suggests that Germany ought to take the lead in action by Europe in the Cuban affair. It declares, as a new fact, that the Spanish Ambassador in Paris had assured his Government that France would very gladly join in any representations made in Washington, if the suggestion came from another Power. The French Government could not possibly take the initiative on account of the intimacy existing *between Russia and America.*[2]

This French utterance is sufficient to indicate at once that, under the circumstances, any French representations in Washington would be merely of an academic character; for it must be taken as out of the question that this or any other French Government would be side by side with Germany in any really energetic action taken against a Power which is intimate with Russia. The French Government has given the measure of what is or is not to be expected from it, and has also indicated Russia's position in the affair.

The tone of political organs in England also make it clear that she looks on the maintenance of good relations with America as much more important than her relations towards Spain. It can be said at once, therefore, that the notion of effective action by Europe cannot be realised, and that a suggestion to this end, made by the Berlin or the Vienna Cabinet, would be without result and merely tend to increase the tension existing between America and Spain.

It was possible to foresee that Spain, whose colonial administration was notoriously behind the demands of the age, would end by having trouble with her colonies. But our gracious Master, His Majesty the Emperor, is justified in deploring that so remarkable a personality, and one so thoroughly sympathetic to himself as the Queen-Regent, should have to bear the consequences of hundreds of years' maladministration. The responsibility which an ignorant and fanatical people was ready to attribute to the Regent, might perhaps be removed from her to a certain extent, if the idea, recently made public, of ending the Cuban conflict by the Pope's arbitration was realised.

The authority of the latter as arbitrator, which is recognised

[1] Not given, as the despatch gives the gist of it.

[2] Cf. Dennis, *Adventures in American Diplomacy*, p. 14.

nowhere in the world more unquestionably than in Spain, would then cover the Regent's responsibility and minimise the dangers threatening the Monarchy. . . .

XV. 12

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN BERLIN, TO RADOWITZ, IN MADRID, *March 17th*, 1898

At the same time that your report of March 11th arrived, the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador handed me the enclosed copy of a document [1] which also deals with the question of European intervention in Spain's favour. My reply to Vienna,[2] which I enclose likewise, by no means exhausts the theme. In justification of my pessimistic view of Spain's situation, I could mention much, which is however long since filed in the records of the Imperial Embassies in Vienna and Madrid. On February 23rd, 1891, the Foreign Office addressed the first despatch to Prince Reuss, who remarked on it that France could hardly be interested in maintaining the Monarchy in Spain, for France, as the leading Power in a Latin-republican Alliance, would be more independent in all directions—even against Russia—than now, when the French Republic must feel more isolated in monarchical Europe ; that, on the other hand, however, Russia for a similar reason, could have no inducement for favouring an extension of the republican system in Europe ; that the Queen of Spain, therefore, who then feared a republican armed rising in the Iberian Peninsula as a consequence of the troubles in Portugal, would do best to apply direct to the Emperor of Russia for eventual support, if needed, without the mediation of Vienna or Berlin.

Since this first mention, His Majesty's Government has repeatedly on various occasions, both in Vienna and Madrid, returned to the conception that if Spain was hoping for European action in her favour, she must first of all gain closer touch with Russia and look for support there. After some time a reply was made to this suggestion, to the effect that the Spanish Government had taken the step advised by us in St. Petersburg, that it had been received in a friendly manner, and that the Spanish Government was expecting a favourable result. Of this final result no news has come to us, but the first sentence of the latest Austrian communication mentions that the French Government has declared its inability to take any initiative for European action in Spain's favour owing to the existing *Russian-American intimacy*. If the Spanish Government's silence regarding the result of the attempt at a rapprochement with St. Petersburg was

[1] Not given. [2] Cf. foregoing despatch.

enough to awaken doubts as to its success, these doubts have been converted into certainty by M. Hanotaux's declaration above-mentioned, which does and at any rate should indicate that Russia would be more likely to side with America than with Spain. No one will now expect France to side with any Power but Russia, whatever the question may be. Thus any uncertainty whether Spain can count on Franco-Russian support against America is settled in the negative, until further notice. It also indicates the only attitude possible for Germany under the circumstances, namely to hold aloof. There is no need to explain in justification, that it is Germany's duty to avoid engaging herself further or earlier than France in a question which has aroused the passions of the American people more and more. The second Napoleonic Empire's Mexican adventure is sufficient warning for us.

You will reply to the Spanish suggestion, mentioned in your report of March 11th, that, after careful examination of this matter, the Emperor deeply regrets that he cannot co-operate in settling the Spanish-American conflict, until France shall have adopted an unmistakable attitude in this question and definitely promised to co-operate, dropping the above-mentioned reservation regarding Russia.

XV. 14

Bernhard von Bülow, in Berlin, to Otto von Bülow, Prussian Minister at the Vatican, *March 26th*, 1898

Telegram.

You will inform Cardinal Kopp [1] for use in confidence, that about a fortnight ago, when matters between Spain and America were coming to a head, the idea of Papal arbitration was suggested *by us in Berlin* in various quarters, and recommended as a solution which would best cover the responsibility of the Spanish Crown. The advantage of arbitration by *this* method would, in our opinion, lie not in its *substance*, but in the personality of the arbitrator, whose decision no one in Spain would question, apart perhaps from the Socialists. It is certainly doubtful whether America would accept the arbitrator; the American bishops would have to co-operate, and the Catholic element is very strong in the American Congress. It might be possible for the American bishops to create a feeling between Rome and Washington regarding the substance of the decision, *before* the Pope was finally accepted as arbitrator.

[1] Prince-bishop of Breslau, staying at the time in Rome.

XV. 14

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW TO OTTO VON BÜLOW, AT THE VATICAN, *March 27th*, 1898

Telegram. Secret.

To follow my telegram of yesterday.

I give below a quotation from a report which arrived to-day from the Imperial Ambassador in Madrid.

'The Queen feels that the question of the conflict with America regarding Cuba has now reached an acute stage, and that its decision can no longer be delayed. Relying on the reports of Marshal Blanco, whom she values highly, she had held hitherto that the rising could once again be successfully repressed, if only the Americans would cease their material support of it. But even if this had been possible, Her Majesty herself no longer believes that the tendencies pointing to complete independence of the colony could be held back permanently. It is her anxiety —and now also that of a continually increasing number of intelligent Spaniards—not so much that Spain should assert her claim to possess Cuba, which is a perpetual danger and a very great burden to her, but rather that the separation of this colony from the Mother-country should be completed in a form which should not threaten the continuance of the present monarchy, or throw the country into the arms of either the Carlists or a republic—or both together, as happened early in the seventies. In the last two years public opinion in Spain has become more familiar than could have before been conceivable with the possibility of losing Cuba, which, on the assumption, naturally, that Spain would also be relieved of the Cuban debt, would be more of a strength than a weakness to the Spanish State.'

This view, held by the Queen and a number of leading politicians—even if not publicly admitted—offers a rational basis for Papal arbitration. I can imagine that the Pope will first have an enquiry made in Madrid, as to whether the Queen and her advisers consider that it would benefit Spain, supposing he arbitrated in favour of relieving the Mother Country of Cuba and the debt contracted for Cuba. If the answer was yes, some dignitary of the Church, whose intelligence and high position made him especially suitable for the task, could enquire in Washington whether the American Government would be satisfied with a decision releasing Cuba from Spain and Spain from the Cuban debt. If yes, then the American Government might appeal for the Pope's arbitration. America would thus have obtained Cuba's freedom without bloodshed and cheaper than by a war—even if she consented to be responsible for a share of the Cuban debt in some form.

You will consult with Cardinal Kopp as to how the foregoing scheme can be submitted to the Pope with the best prospect of success, and let suitable action be taken without loss of time.

The finding of the *Maine* Commission has already been telegraphed from Washington to Madrid; time presses, therefore.

German Note.

On February 15th, 1898, the American ironclad *Maine*, lying off Cuba, blew up. A Commission of Enquiry found that the explosion was due to action from outside, i.e., a torpedo or a mine. This finding brought the anti-Spanish feeling in the United States to fever heat. War with Spain and the conquest of Cuba were violently demanded.

XV. 16

RADOWITZ, IN MADRID, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *March 26th*, 1898

Cipher telegram.

This afternoon the Minister of State [1] verbally informed the Ambassadors of Austria, France, Russia, Italy, myself and the British Chargé d'Affaires, in identical terms, that in view of the threatening development of affairs with the United States of America, the Spanish Government desired to forward through the representatives here to our Governments the following confidential request: 'That the Powers should advise both Spain and the United States of America to prevent the conflict which may arise out of the questions put by Mr. Woodford in his note of March 23rd by accepting an arbitrator, so that peace be not disturbed.'

According to the Minister of State's further remarks, the first step would be to ascertain whether the Powers would be willing to offer this advice to both parties. There must be a further understanding as to the choice of arbitrator and the form of the question under dispute. They would be especially grateful here for the greatest possible despatch of the Powers in sending their answers. All my colleagues have received a similar message.

XV. 16

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN BERLIN, TO RADOWITZ, IN MADRID, *March 28th*, 1898

Telegram.

For the reasons known to you His Majesty's Government is prevented from taking the lead in the Spanish-America affair. You will, therefore, report at once what is known to you of the replies returned by other Cabinets.

[1] Gullon.

XV. 17

OTTO VON BÜLOW, PRUSSIAN MINISTER AT THE VATICAN, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *March 29th*, 1898

Cipher telegram.

As instructed by your telegrams of March 26th and 27th,[1] I have just spoken to the Cardinal Secretary of State. He expects that I shall receive the Pope's reply to-morrow. First of all he said that, owing to the fact that the situation was becoming critical, His Holiness had telegraphed two days ago to Archbishop Ireland with instructions to go to Washington, there to bring pressure on the President (who is a friend of his) in the direction of a peaceful solution of the conflict.

Then the Cardinal Secretary of State enquired what kind of reception—if they were received at all—Your Highness' suggestions regarding arbitration had been accorded in the various quarters, and, for the rest, he confined himself to remarking that from his knowledge of the country and of the expressions used by the Spanish Press at the time, he personally was convinced that the loss of Cuba, even if brought about by arbitration, would make an end of the Monarchy.

XV. 17

OTTO VON BÜLOW, AT THE VATICAN, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *March 30th*, 1898

Cipher telegram.

The Cardinal Secretary of State has just handed me the following reply in the Pope's name:

His Holiness personally takes a lively personal interest in the maintenance of peace and of the Spanish Monarchy.

As regards the arbitration proposal, judging from the intelligence that is before him and from the Spanish Ambassador's words, the Pope considers it impossible for the Spanish Government to relinquish Cuba.

Nevertheless, His Holiness, in order to meet the desire shared, as he believes, by other Powers, will not fail to enquire in Madrid as to what is felt there on this question, and the Nuncio [2] will be instructed to-day by telegraph. Cardinal Rampolla requested strict secrecy.

German Note.

For the measures taken by the Pope, cf. the following document, and Schulthess' *Europäischer Geschichtskalender*, 1898, p. 303.

[1] Cf. pp. 502–3.

[2] Monsignor J. Francisca Nava.

XV. 18

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN BERLIN, TO RADOWITZ, IN MADRID, *March 31st*, 1898

Telegram. Very confidential.

The Cardinal Secretary of State has informed the Royal [Prussian] Minister, von Bülow, that the Nuncio was instructed yesterday by telegraph to enquire in Madrid whether arbitration by the Pope would be acceptable there. This initiative of the Curia, which is to be attributed to suggestion from here, will be a relief to the Spanish Government, for public opinion in the country might easily take for cowardice a suggestion in this sense, if made by Spain. The Imperial Government considers all else to be the affair of those interested, i.e., the parties and the eventual arbitrator. We ought to avoid mixing further in the affair, since, on the one hand, we have no wish to assume moral responsibility for the results of the loss of Cuba, whilst, on the other, it seems fairly improbable that America will accept the Pope's arbitration, without *previous* assurance regarding the concessions mentioned in the last part of your report of March 22nd.[1] Moreover, the Americans are not likely to be impressed by the attitude of the European Powers, which was, indeed, foreseen by His Imperial Majesty's Government; among these, Russia and France, perhaps under the influence of England's silence, refuse all initiative and merely utter platonic words of sympathy.

XV. 19

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN BERLIN, TO THE EMPEROR WILLIAM, AT HOMBURG, *April 1st*, 1898

Cipher telegram.

Your Majesty's Minister at the Vatican telegraphs:

'Cardinal Secretary of State tells me that the Nuncio in Madrid reports that, in answer to his enquiry, the Spanish Government declares it to be impossible to accept arbitration on the basis of cession of Cuba.' (The EMPEROR: '*Then there is no way of helping them! they will lose Cuba all the same!*')

XV. 20

MEMORANDUM BY BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, *April 5th*, 1898

I informed the Spanish Ambassador that I had no advice to offer him officially. My personal view was that if I had the honour to be Spanish Foreign Minister, I should have given the Pope *carte blanche*, in order to avoid war between Spain and America. I added that I should be acting disloyally, if I allowed

[1] Cf. telegram of March 27th, 1898.

the Ambassador to believe that there was any real prospect of active intervention in Spain's favour by the World Powers, who were just now mainly occupied with the Far East.

The Ambassador replied that any further giving way would have caused the fall of the Ministry and the dynasty in Spain, and that would be worse than war. Spain had no need to fear war, but Europe might well fear the fall of the Spanish Monarchy and a further increase of America's power.

XV. 20

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN BERLIN, TO THE EMPEROR WILLIAM, AT HOMBURG, *April 7th*, 1898

Telegram.

Your Majesty's gracious minute to my humble letter of April 2nd [1] is of the greatest interest to me. I thoroughly agree with the view that in dealing with the Spanish-American conflict, we must avoid all appearance of unnecessary partisanship, especially against America, and must only join in mediation by the Powers, if all the rest go forward together, and then only as far as is unavoidable, in order not to arouse distrust among the other Powers and even in America itself.

XV. 21

HOLLEBEN, AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *April 7th*, 1898

Cipher telegram.

The representatives of the six Great Powers presented a collective note [2] to the President at midday to-day, urging him on the score of humanity to maintain peace, and expressing the hope that order would be restored in Cuba without resorting to war. After long consideration, we decided to go no deeper into questions still unsettled. The President received the note with apparent satisfaction and replied to it in a long declaration, expressing thanks and also a hope that peace might be maintained, but without engaging himself in any way. I am sending the text of both declarations by post, if I am not instructed to telegraph them.

The whole step will have a certain effect and will do good, if only morally, as may be supposed. A report follows.

Not much importance is attached here to mediation by the Pope; there has been no direct message from him to the Government here, and it would probably have done harm; on the other

[1] Not in the Records.

[2] For text of the note and the reply, see Schulthess' *Europäischer Geschichtskalender*, 1898, p. 348 et seq.

hand, they would be grateful if the Pope would induce the Spanish Government to give way, and the insurgents to accept an armistice.

XV. 22

RADOWITZ, IN MADRID, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *April 9th*, 1898

Cipher telegram.

The representatives of the six Powers, also of Russia, spoke early to-day to the Minister of State in the terms, as reported.[1] The Austrian and French Ambassadors had already received orders from their Governments to join with their colleagues in such a démarche.

Gullon, the Minister of State, took note of our words and stated that he desired to report them to the Queen and the Council of Ministers. At 3 p.m. he informed the Nuncio and ourselves, that, in consequence of the repeated representations of the Holy Father, supported by the friendly advice of the representatives here of the six Powers, the Government had decided to inform the Holy Father that the General commanding in Cuba had been instructed to obtain an immediate cessation of hostilities for a period which he might consider suitable in order to prepare for a permanent peace, and to proceed with the work. The withdrawal of the American ships is no longer mentioned as a condition. The news will be known here this evening through the Press. It appears that there is not to be a formal proclamation by the Queen, as was intended earlier. She has expressed, through the Nuncio, her very warm personal thanks to the representatives.

German Note.

The Spanish Government's decision was communicated in an official note by the Spanish Minister in Washington to the American Government, on April 10th, 1898.

On April 11th, President MacKinley sent a message to Congress, asking for powers to intervene immediately in the hostilities between Spain and Cuba, and to employ the land and sea forces of the United States for this object. On the 13th the House of Representatives empowered the President to intervene under arms. On the 22nd Spain broke off relations with the United States, and on the 24th a declaration of war followed.

XV. 22

BERNHARD VON BÜLOW, IN BERLIN, TO THE EMPEROR WILLIAM, AT WIESBADEN, *April 15th*, 1898

Cipher telegram.

Your Majesty's Ambassador in Washington telegraphs: 'The attitude of Congress causes all hope of peace to disappear. It is

[1] I.e., in the sense of immediate and unconditional cessation of hostilities by Spain in Cuba.

very remarkable that the British Ambassador [1] to-day took the initiative in a fresh step by the representatives of the Great Powers. We imagine that the Queen-Regent has applied to the Queen of England in this sense.

'At the desire of the British Ambassador the six representatives are telegraphing to their Governments as follows:

'In view of the attitude of Congress no further hope of peace can be entertained, and general opinion appears to imagine that the Powers also do not object to war. The Spanish Minister's note of April 10th seems to offer a good basis for fresh negotiations. If the Governments share this view, it would appear advisable to dissipate the misconception that armed intervention in Cuba is approved by the civilised world. (The President, in his December message, said that he only desired intervention if this were the case.) Under these circumstances, the representatives here believe that the Great Powers might call the attention of this Government to the Spanish note of April 10th, and declare that armed intervention does not appear to them justified. This declaration might take the form of a collective note from the Powers to the representatives of the United States of America. This would make a greater impression and not make it appear as though the representatives merely desired to repeat their first step, which the President did not even deign to mention in his most recent message. If an identical note were decided upon, it would be advisable to publish it immediately, in order to relieve the civilised world of the reproach of having condoned this aggression, for which their authority is being quoted.'

I personally feel fairly indifferent about publication (The EMPEROR: *'I think it perfectly mistaken, pointless, and therefore harmful. We should put ourselves wrong with the Americans as we did with the Greeks and Turks, who whistled at our collective notes!'*), although I think that a public branding of this wanton attack would be very appropriate. A step taken here could only lower the dignity of the Powers (The EMPEROR: *'Correct.'*), if the representatives are not supplied with suitable means for countering an unfriendly answer. Identical notes would only work if published at once. If the conflict became acute, as seems likely, I hold that sending a war-ship to safeguard German interests in Cuba should be considered. Other Powers are taking similar precautions.

I made immediate enquiries in St. Petersburg regarding the collective démarche suggested by the European representatives in Washington (The EMPEROR: *'I am against this step.'*), because hitherto Russia has been the least willing in this affair.

[1] Sir Julian Pauncefote. (See note below.)

[A. L. P. Dennis (*Adventures in American Diplomacy*, p. 73) makes the following statement: 'The Austrian Ambassador put forward the suggestion, and a meeting was held at the Austrian Embassy of the European representatives with the exception of the British Ambassador. He, as *doyen* of the diplomatic corps, had been notified and had called a meeting; shortly the five Ambassadors crossed from the Austrian Embassy to the British Embassy, where a lengthy conference took place. As *doyen* Sir Julian Pauncefote naturally drafted a note in which there was not a word to which any American could object. . . . M. Cambon, the French Ambassador, suggested he redraft the proposed note. He wrote in French and made verbal changes, among them the phrase was inserted that American intervention in Cuba *ne sera pas justifiée*. . . . Unfortunately this version of the draft was permitted to stand, for this phrase did not attract Sir Julian's attention. . . .' (Cf. p. 514.)]

German Note.

According to the report by Holleben (April 14th, 1898), there can be no doubt that the initiative for the fresh collective action by the Powers in Washington originated with the British Ambassador, Sir Julian Pauncefote. It is well known that the Ambassador denied this later on, early in 1902, through the medium of the *Associated Press* of America, and that he tried to transfer the odium of the attempted interference on to Germany. The question led to an animated Press feud in the British, American and German papers, into which the British and German Governments were dragged by a question in Parliament. As Lord Cranborne, British Under-Secretary of State on January 21st, 1902, described the affair in the House of Commons, it was owing to the objections raised by the British Government that the 1898 proposals for a fresh collective step by the Powers in Washington fell to the ground. The German Government then felt obliged to publish in the *Reichs- und Staatsanzeiger* of February 12th Bülow's telegram of April 15th (see above). This was followed by an angry exchange of notes between the British and German Governments, which did not help their mutual relations. The British Government clung to the end to the assertion that the German Ambassador, Holleben, must have misunderstood Sir J. Pauncefote's action at the Conference of April 14th, 1898, but there is the testimony of the French Ambassador, Cambon, in support of Holleben,[1] to prove that Pauncefote was wrong in his assertions. The official *Journal de St. Pétersbourg* of February 23rd, 1902, specifically confirms the fact of the British initiative. 'C'est alors que l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre suggéra l'idée d'une nouvelle tentative des Grandes Puissances. Dans une réunion qui eut lieu chez Lord Pauncefote le 2 (14) Avril, 1898, il proposa à ses collègues d'adresser à leurs gouvernements un télégramme dont il avait redigé d'avance le texte en anglais. Ce télégramme, traduit ensuite en français, fut expédié, selon la proposition du représentant britannique, aux gouvernements respectifs.'

XV. 25

Bernhard von Bülow, in Berlin, to the Emperor William, at Wiesbaden, *April 16th*, 1898

Cipher telegram.

Your Majesty's Ambassador in St. Petersburg telegraphs the

[1] Cf. p. 514; also the *Life of Lord Pauncefote*, by R. B. Mowat, p. 215.

following regarding a conversation which he had had with Count Muravieff on the opportuneness of a fresh step by the Powers with the American Government: 'Count Muravieff will receive the Emperor's commands to-morrow, as to whether it is considered right for Russia to join in an identical or a collective note. Personally he considered (but he said particularly that he was not speaking as Foreign Minister and would, if need be, deny what he had said) (The EMPEROR: '*That is what he always has done.*') that both steps would be pointless, for America would certainly not accept them, and they would only damage the Powers' credit with America, once the latter thought war inevitable. (The EMPEROR: '*Quite correct! Just what I thought.*') These notes would be a stone thrown into the water and were bound to annoy America. Count Muravieff fears that the whole proposal, which comes from England, is intended to disunite us monarchical Powers from America. (The EMPEROR: '*?*') If once annoyance took root, it would be hard for us to draw near to America again, and this might be necessary under certain circumstances. It would not be so difficult for purely parliamentary Powers as for monarchical Powers, such as Russia and Germany, to draw near again. Count Muravieff is strengthened in the belief that this is the English calculation, as England's game at first was not clear, in as much as she proposed mediation in America, and then, when she was unsuccessful in this, sheltered herself behind the Powers so as to take common action. The fact that the President did not give a single word of mention [in his message to Congress of April 11th] to the first Note of the Ambassadors, shows that America does not desire the unanimity of the Powers. Count Muravieff thinks it would be dangerous to force the Powers' intervention on America, for it might occur to her to interfere in *European* affairs at some future date (The EMPEROR: '*Not improbably.*'), and this could not be permitted.

'As regards Spain, Count Muravieff thinks that the interests of the dynasty must be considered before everything else. In his opinion the only chance of saving it will be for the Queen to place herself at the head of the movement, and to make war whatever the cost may be, even though there may be no chance of success. (The EMPEROR: '*Yes.*') Only thus can the dynasty maintain and strengthen itself. If this is not done, the Queen would undoubtedly have to give way before a revolution. To use Count Muravieff's words: "Si la Reine est sage, modérée et vraiment patriotique, elle succombera et sera renvoyée. (The EMPEROR: '*Very easily possible.*') Si, par contre, elle se met à la tête du mouvement et n'est ni sage ni patriotique, elle peut sauver sa couronne; c'est cynique, mais c'est ainsi." (The EMPEROR: '*Then she must not hesitate for a minute.*')

'Count Muravieff summed up his exposition by saying that in his personal opinion there could be no promise of success for either an identical or a collective note; he thinks non-intervention to be the best policy. (The EMPEROR: '*Yes.*') At the end he repeated that he said this as a friend, not as a Minister, for as such he could never have confided his views to me.'

The suggestion for this common step originated in England, and this from the first made a Russian refusal probable. I considered therefore that I should be carrying out Your Majesty's intentions if I enquired in St. Petersburg only regarding acceptance of the British proposal, so that we may not shoulder the responsibility for refusal all alone. Count Muravieff's answer turned out as Your Majesty foresaw. He first gave merely 'his personal views', which are, however, most decidedly that he thinks the British proposal doomed to failure and harmful to the relations of the European monarchies with America. He also gives a friendly hint that this is what England probably intends.

Following Your Majesty's commands, I will at once reply to Count Muravieff that Your Majesty considers that an empty protest would merely do harm to the dignity of the Powers, and I will telegraph to Vienna and London that a fresh suggestion has been made by England for a new collective step in Washington in the interests of peace. From what is known here of the Russian Government's views, its participation is more than doubtful; Your Majesty's Government, however, considers that a fresh platonic step—and to anything more the combined Powers would never agree—would do no good to Spain, but merely injure the dignity of the Powers. Finally I will communicate Prince Radolin's telegram to Herr von Radowitz [in Madrid] for his private information.

German Note.

In view of the negative position adopted by Germany and Russia, including also France, the European Powers intervened no further in Washington. Even during the war, in spite of information to the contrary, emanating mainly from England, Germany remained true to the policy of non-intervention. In answer to a telegram from Holleben, the Ambassador, of June 5th, 1898, which hinted at the possibility of a peace-proposal by the continental Powers, the Emperor William remarked that he would not fall into that trap again; mediation was nonsense, until one or other of the belligerents was completely defeated.

A telegram from Baron von Richthoven, Under-Secretary of State, to Radowitz, the Ambassador, of July 16th, expressly declared that mediation by the continental Powers was impossible; the right course was for Spain to appeal to the combined continental Powers to join with England for the purpose of mediation.—It is known that, instead of this, Spain used the good offices of Cambon, the French Ambassador in Washington, to initiate peace negotiations with America. The French Minister for Foreign Affairs, however, took care to insist that France would not act as mediator, but would only transmit the Spanish peace proposals.

XV. 28

HOLLEBEN, IN WASHINGTON, TO THE CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE, *April 22nd*, 1898

If, as I said elsewhere, the time has now come when the European Powers should watch that their interests are not damaged by the Spanish-American war, it is natural that a firm and lasting agreement between those Great Powers should seem highly desirable. (The EMPEROR: '*Very right, but the Devil bring all these obstinate fellows together.*') Austria, Italy, France—and, through her, Russia also—need not be despaired of; but England's attitude here (The EMPEROR: '*Towards us also.*') is so very problematical that a word of explanation might be of service. (The EMPEROR: '*The aim is to fish in troubled waters.*')

At the beginning of the Cuban conflict, England showed the United States some platonic favour, as I still fully believe, with special reference to the Far East; but this did not in the least prevent her from joining in the collective step of the Powers on April 7th. Shortly afterwards it was Sir Julian Pauncefote who rejected the further steps which were advised here for common action by the Powers and which found expression in the identical proposals of the six representatives here to their Governments, on the 18th. But I understand from my French colleague that nothing more came of this, owing to England's lukewarm attitude, a matter which, as Your Highness knows, I do not especially regret. Now again we have the extremely friendly articles in the Press of both countries, especially on this side, and the after-dinner speeches by the American Ambassador in London (John Hay), and Henry White, the Secretary of the American Embassy in London, has appeared here, apparently on a secret mission. Sir Julian Pauncefote, however, ridicules the whole affair and, so far as it is a question of demonstrations of friendship here, calls it perfectly absurd. That is a lot in Sir Julian's mouth when speaking of America. (The EMPEROR: '*Perhaps he lies.*')

Minute by the EMPEROR.

England wishes to play the same game as when, last year, she confessedly promoted the Greco-Turkish war. She suggests measures to be taken by all the Powers, and seems to be taking part in them, until the belligerent has been thoroughly compromised by them. Then she retires, beats her breast like a Pharisee, declares that she has had nothing to do with it, allies herself secretly with one of the contending parties—the strongest, of course—and excites him against the Continental Powers! And all the time she is begging for commercial favours at their expense.

England won't throw in its lot with the continental Powers,[1]

[1] English in text.

but she persists in imagining herself as an independent bit of the world between the Continent and America or Asia.

XV. 29

HOLLEBEN, IN WASHINGTON, TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE, *February 13th*, 1902

Cipher telegram.

The French Ambassador described to me a visit paid to him to-day by the British Ambassador, as follows:

'Sir J. Pauncefote was completely shattered and greatly worried, and asked me how matters were four years ago; he could not remember the details. He said it was certainly the Austrian Minister (Baron von Hengelmüller) who had induced him to attend the meeting of April 14th, 1898, and he could not remember whether he had really submitted a draft note. I replied to him that the meeting was invited by himself, and that, at the beginning of it, without reference of any sort to the Austrian Minister, he had submitted the draft which had been made public by the Berlin Foreign Office; a discussion then followed, during which a different shape was given to the draft in several details, and that finally it had been translated by me into French, as French had been the language used during the conference.'

This agrees entirely with my recollections.

It is extremely probable that Sir J. Pauncefote acted at the time without instructions; it is unknown what he reported to his Government later on.

German Note.

The British Government rejected the German Government's suggestion that Pauncefote's report on the conference of February [? April] 14th should be published.

One proof that the draft note originated with him, is that it was drafted in English, which language none of the rest of us would have used. M. Cambon added that on that day he had been the last to leave the British Embassy, and that on shaking hands, Sir J. Pauncefote had used expressions little flattering to the Americans, including the word 'brigands'.

To-day's *Evening Star* urges that the whole dispute be allowed to drop; and says that there is universal amity.

[In the final peace treaty there was no mention of taking over the debts imposed upon her colonies by Spain.]

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Ali ben Said, Sultan of Zanzibar, 1890–3.
Alvensleben, Count von, German Minister at Brussels, 1888–1901 ; St. Petersburg, 1901–5.
Anderson, Sir H. Percy, colonial department of the Foreign Office, 1885–94 ; Under-Secretary, 1894–6.

Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J., First Lord of the Treasury, 1891–2, 1895–1902 ; Prime Minister, 1902–6. In Coalition and Conservative Governments from 1915 ; created Earl, 1922.
Baratieri, Italian general ; in Abyssinia, 1891–6.
Bismarck, Count Herbert, German Foreign Minister, 1886–90.
Blanc, Baron A., Italian Ambassador in Constantinople, 1887–91 ; Foreign Minister, 1893–6.
Bülow, Bernhard von, Count, German Minister at Bucarest, 1888–94 ; Ambassador in Rome, 1894–7 ; Foreign Secretary, 1897–1900 ; Chancellor, 1900–9 (Prince, 1905).
Bülow, Otto von, Count, Prussian Minister at the Vatican, 1892–8.

Calice, Baron, Austrian Ambassador in Constantinople, 1880–1906.
Cambon, Jules, French Ambassador in Washington, 1897–1902 ; Madrid, 1902–7.
Cambon, Paul, French Ambassador in Madrid, 1886–91 ; Constantinople, 1891–8 ; London, 1898–1920.
Caprivi, Count Leo von, Chancellor, 1890–4.
Chamberlain, Joseph, Board of Trade, 1880–6 ; Colonial Secretary, 1895–1903.
Chambers, Chief Justice in Samoa, 1898.
Chirol, Sir Valentine, *Times* correspondent and author.
Cleveland, Grover, United States President, 1885–9, 1893–7.
Courcel, Baron A. de, French Ambassador in Berlin, 1882–6 ; London, 1894–8.
Crispi, F., Italian Premier, 1887–91, 1893–6.
Cromer, Earl of (Sir Evelyn Baring), Consul-General and diplomatic agent at Cairo, 1883–1907.
Culme-Seymour, Admiral Sir Michael, commanding Mediterranean squadron.
Currie, Lord (Sir Philip), Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, 1889–94 ; Ambassador in Constantinople, 1894–8 ; Rome, 1898–1903.
Curzon, G. N. (Marquis), Parl. Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, 1895–8 ; Viceroy of India, 1898–1905.

DENHARDT Bros., German traders in Africa.
DEYM, Count, Austrian Ambassador in London, 1888–1903.
DILKE, Sir Charles, Liberal member of Parliament.
DJEVAD PACHA, Grand Vizir, 1891–5.
DUFFERIN, Marquis of, Ambassador in Constantinople, 1881–4; Viceroy of India, 1884–8; Rome, 1888–91; Paris, 1891–7.

ECKARDSTEIN, Baron von, first secretary at the German Embassy in London, 1899–1902.
EDINBURGH, Alfred, Duke of.
EDWARD VII (Prince of Wales).
ELLIOT, Francis, Consul-General at Sofia, 1895–1903.
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EUAN SMITH, Sir C., Consul-General at Zanzibar, 1887–91; Minister at Tangier, 1891–3.

FAKHRI PACHA, Turkish Prime Minister, 1893.
FERDINAND, Prince of Bulgaria (King), 1887–1918.
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GOLTZ, General Baron von der, in Turkish service, 1883–95.
GOLUCHOVSKI, Count A., Austrian Minister at Bucarest, 1887–94; Foreign Minister, 1895–1906.
GOSSELIN, Sir Martin, at Berlin Embassy, 1893–6; in London Foreign Office, 1896–1902.
GREEN, Sir W. Kirby, British Minister at Tangier, 1886–91.
GREY, of Fallodon, K.G. (Sir Edward), Parl. Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, 1892–5; Foreign Secretary, 1906–16.
GRIERSON, General Sir H., Military Attaché in Berlin, 1896–1900; attached to Count Waldersee's staff in China, 1900–1.

HANOTAUX, G., French Foreign Minister, 1894–8.
HARCOURT, Sir William, Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1892–5.
HATZFELDT-WILDENBURG, Count Paul, German Foreign Minister, 1881–5; Ambassador in London, 1885–1901.
HAWEIS, H. R., preacher and journalist, 1892.
HERBETTE, Jules, French Ambassador in Berlin, 1886–96.
HEYKING, Baron von, German Consul-General in Cairo, 1893–5; Minister at Tangier, 1895–6; at Peking, 1896–9.
HOHENLOHE-SCHILLINGSFÜRST, Prince Chlodwig von, governor of Alsace-Lorraine, 1885–94; Chancellor, 1894–1900.
HOLLMANN, Admiral von, Secretary to German Admiralty, 1890–7.
HOLSTEIN, Baron F. von, Berlin Foreign Office, 1880–1906.

JAMESON, Dr. L. Starr, administrator of Rhodesia for the Chartered Company.

KALNOKY, Count G., Austrian Foreign Minister, 1881–95.

KAPNIST, Count, Asiatic department of Russian Foreign Office, 1892–5; Ambassador in Vienna, 1895–1904.
KAYSER, Paul, head of Colonial department, Berlin Foreign Office, 1890–6.
KIAMIL PACHA, Grand Vizir, 1885–91, 1895.
KIDERLEN-WAECHTER, Berlin Foreign Office, 1888–94; Prussian Minister at Hamburg, 1894–5; Copenhagen, 1895–9; Bucarest, 1899–1910.
KIMBERLEY, Earl of, Foreign Secretary, 1894–5.
KITCHENER, General Sir H. H., Sirdar of Egypt, 1892–9; South Africa, 1899–1902; created Viscount; Commander-in-Chief in India, 1902–09; Agent-General at Cairo, 1911–14; Secretary of State for War, 1914–16.
KRUGER, Paul, President of Transvaal Republic.

LABOUCHERE, Henry, Liberal member of Parliament; editor of *Truth*.
LASCELLES, Sir Frank C., Ambassador in St. Petersburg, 1894–5; Berlin, 1895–1908.
LEYDEN, Count, German Embassy, London, 1888–90; Consul-General at Cairo, 1890–3; Minister at Bucarest, 1893–7.
LICHNOVSKY, Prince von, at Vienna Embassy, 1894–9; Berlin Foreign Office, 1899, 1904; Ambassador in London, 1912–14.
LOBANOFF-ROSTOVSKY, Prince, Russian Ambassador in Vienna, 1882–94; Foreign Minister, 1895–6.
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MILLEVOYE, L., French deputy, editor of *La Patrie*.
MONSON, Sir Edmund, Ambassador in Vienna, 1893–6; Paris, 1896–1905.
MONTEBELLO, French Ambassador in Constantinople, 1896–91; St. Petersburg, 1891–1903.
MORIER, Sir Robert, Ambassador in St. Petersburg, 1884–93.
MUNIR BEY, Secretary to Turkish Foreign Office, 1894; Ambassador in Paris, 1895–1908.
MÜNSTER, Count G. zu (Prince), German Ambassador in London, 1873–85, Paris, 1885–1900.
MUSTAPHA FEHMI PACHA, Prime Minister in Egypt, 1893.

NELIDOFF, Russian Ambassador in Constantinople, 1883–97.
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NICOLSON, Sir Arthur (Lord Carnock), at Constantinople Embassy, 1893–4; Minister at Tangier, 1895–1905; Madrid, 1906–10; Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, 1910–16.
NIGRA, Count, Italian Ambassador in Vienna, 1885–1904.
NOVIKOFF, Olga de, Russian journalist (pseudonym 'O.K.'), 1892.
NUBAR PACHA, Foreign Minister in Egypt, 1866–79; Premier, 1884–8, 1894–6.

O'CONOR, Sir Nicholas, Ambassador in St. Petersburg, 1895–8; Constantinople, 1898–1906.

OSMAN DIGNA, Mahdist leader.
OSTEN-SACKEN, Count de la, Russian Ambassador in Berlin, 1895–1912.

PAGET, Sir Augustus, Ambassador in Vienna, 1884–93.
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PETERS, Karl, Imperial commissioner in German East Africa, 1891–3 (connected with East Africa, 1884–1901).
PHIPPS, Edmund, at Paris Embassy, 1892–4.

RADOLIN, Prince, Ambassador in Constantinople, 1892–4; St. Petersburg, 1895–1900.
RADOWITZ, J. von, Ambassador in Constantinople, 1882–92; Madrid, 1892–1908.
RAMPOLLA, Cardinal, papal Secretary of State, 1887–1903.
RHODES, Cecil, Premier of Cape Colony, 1890–4, 1894–6.
RIBOT, A., French Foreign Minister, 1890–3; Premier, 1892–3, 1895.
RICHTHOFEN, Baron O. von, commissioner for the Egyptian *dette publique*, 1894; colonial department of the Foreign Office, 1896–7; Under-Secretary of State, 1897–1900.
RIDGEWAY, Sir West, on mission at Tangier, 1893; governor of Ceylon, 1896–1903.
RIFAAT PACHA, Grand Vizir, 1895–1901.
RISTOW, Prussian officer in Turkish service, 1890.
ROHLFS, G., African pioneer; consul at Zanzibar, 1885.
ROSEBERY, Earl of, Foreign Secretary, 1892–4; Prime Minister, 1894–5.
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ROTHSCHILD, Alfred de, London banker.
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RUSTEM PACHA, Turkish Ambassador in London, 1885–95.

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SALISBURY, Marquess of, at Berlin Congress, 1878; Foreign Secretary, 1878–80; Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, 1885, 1886–92, 1895–1902.
SANDERSON, Sir Thomas (Lord), Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, 1894–1906.
SAN MINIATELLI, Major, on mission to Cairo, 1894.
SAURMA-JELTSCH, Baron A., German Consul-General at Cairo, 1882; Ambassador in Washington, 1893–5; Constantinople, 1895–7; Rome, 1897–9.
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STUMM, Baron F. von, German Ambassador in Madrid, 1887–92.
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Swaine, Colonel, military Attaché in Berlin, 1882–9 ; 1891–6.
Szögyény-Marich, Austrian Foreign Office, 1883–92 ; Ambassador in Berlin, 1892–1914.

Tattenbach, Count von, Minister at Tangier, 1889–95 ; Minister in Lisbon, 1897–1908.
Tetuan, O'Donell, Duke of, Spanish Foreign Minister, 1890–2.
Tewfik Pacha, Ambassador in Berlin, 1886–95 ; Foreign Minister, 1895–1901.
Thornton, Sir Edward, Ambassador in Constantinople, 1884–6.
Tornielli, Count, Italian Ambassador in London, 1889–95 ; Paris, 1895–1908.
Tricoupis, Charilaos, Greek Premier, 1886–90, 1892–5.
Tschirschky, at German Embassy in St. Petersburg, 1894–1900.

Vassos, Colonel, commanding Greek expedition in Crete, 1897.
Victoria, Queen, 1837–1901.
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Lord d'Abernon), chairman of the Ottoman Bank in Constantinople ; first Ambassador to Germany after the Great War.
Vivian, Lord, Ambassador in Rome, 1892–3.
Vucovitch, Montenegrin Foreign Minister, 1890–1907.
Vulcovitch, Bulgarian agent in Constantinople, 1887–92.

Waddington, French Foreign Minister, 1877–9 ; Ambassador in London, 1888–93.
Wallace, Sir Donald MacKenzie, head of the Foreign Department of the *Times*.
Werder, General von, German Ambassador in St. Petersburg, 1892–5.
White, Sir William, Envoy-extraordinary at Constantinople, 1885–6 ; Ambassador, 1887–91.
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Witboy, Hendrik, Hottentot chief, 1893.
Witte, Russian Finance Minister, 1892–1903.
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